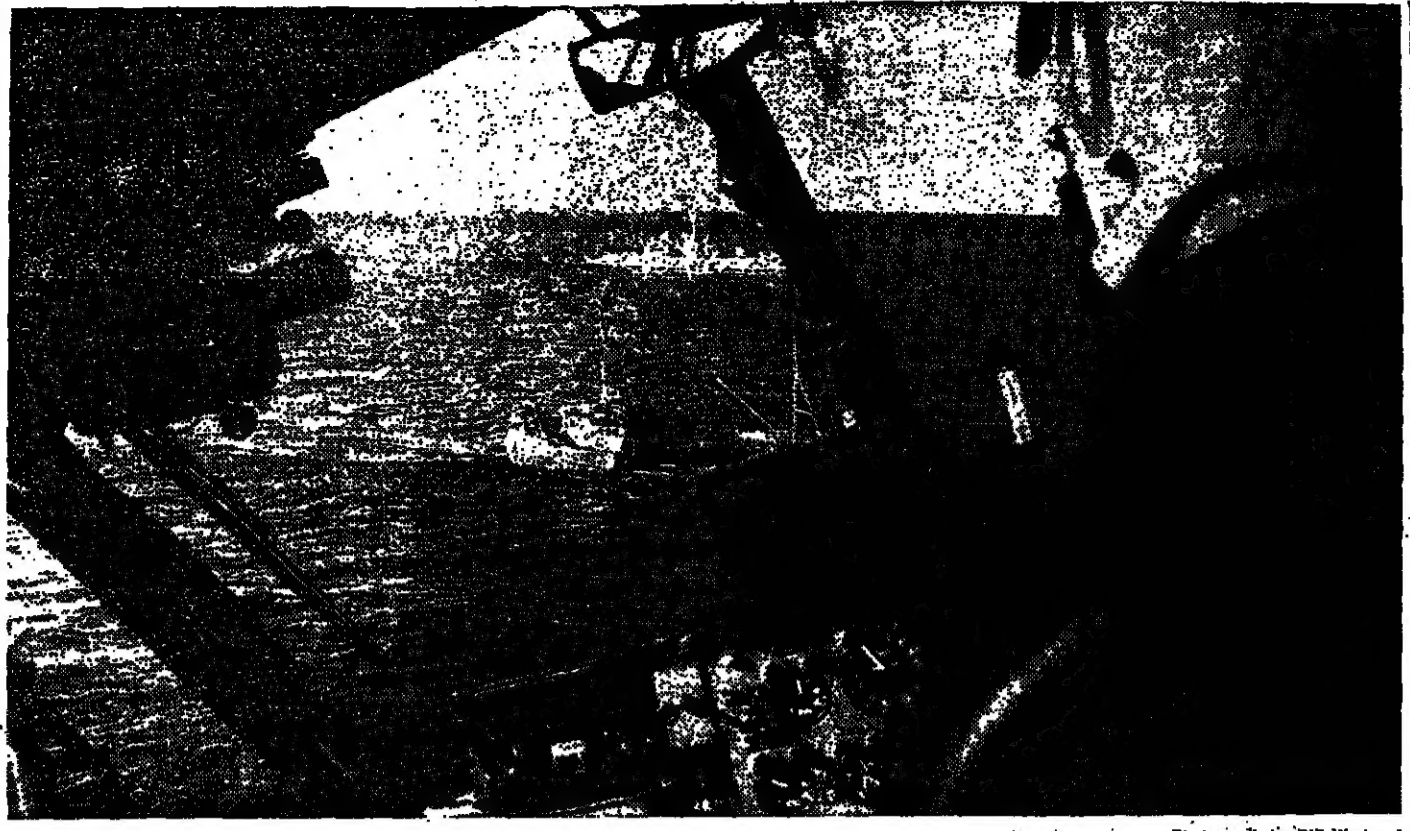


Pound slumps after worst monthly trade gap of £545m

Trading fortunes deteriorated in January with a deficit of £545m, the worst recorded in a single month. It was due to some extent to the effects of the long Christmas holiday but they sent a chill through the City where the pound closed one and a half cents lower against the dollar and share prices tumbled. The FT index closed more than 15 points lower.

'Built-in error' distorts figures

The result, almost certainly, was an underestimation of exports and an overestimation of imports. This is because the export figures contained in the January trade statistics actually refer to a period from mid-December to mid-January, which took in virtually all the Christmas holiday. Imports, on the other hand, were recorded in the month when they are supposed to occur, so the January figures are not reduced on the import side in the same way. The impact of the holidays on import figures can now be seen to have been one of the main factors behind the freakishly good December trade statistics, which showed a trade deficit of only £15m. If December and January are averaged out, they suggest a monthly deficit of £580m, which is what the authorities think is roughly in line with the real trend. A surplus on "invisibles" of around £200m a month brings the estimated figure for the current account deficit down to £180m a month, a figure which is expected to improve in the course of the year. However, the present figures show little sign yet of any major grounds for optimism about the country's trading performance. The most worrying thing, perhaps, is that the volumes of imports and exports are moving so sharply to our disadvantage. Imports rose 16 per cent in



Helicopter view of a boarding party from the British frigate Plymouth (background) approaching a Danish trawler in the North Sea to check the catch. Another photograph page 6.

Romanian dissidents issue open letter

Belgrade, Feb 14.—Eight Romanian human rights activists have issued an open letter complaining about the lack of rights in their country. The letter, which reached Belgrade today, called on the 55 states due to attend a European security conference here in June to hold a separate meeting on the defence of human rights. The eight said that the Romanian Government did not respect the principles of free expression, the free circulation of ideas and press freedom enshrined in the 1975 Helsinki declaration on human rights and détente, which Romania signed. The group said that Romania was among countries where ideas were imposed by force and "work is more important than the human who is working". Although the constitution guaranteed basic human rights, these were denied. The letter, addressed to all participants in the Belgrade conference, went on: "We protest against all possible forms of suppression—physical, moral and intellectual—which occur in political prisons, camps and psychological clinics or in old, decrepit, and crumbling houses under the concepts of freedom and dignity". The letter did not name any country, but clearly alluded to Soviet bloc states. Mr Paul Goma, an author, is the only signatory known outside Romania. He has been in trouble with the authorities since his novel, *Otintato*, was published in West Germany in 1971. A second novel, *The Door*, was published in West Germany a year later and also banned in Romania. Both dealt with lack of freedom. Mr Goma, who spent several years in prison in the late 1950s as a "revisionist", last week wrote to the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* supporting Czechoslovak dissidents. Vienna: Mr Strougal, the Czechoslovak Prime Minister, has postponed an official visit to Vienna next month after criticism by Dr Kreisky, the Austrian Chancellor, of the way the Prague Government is treating the Charter 77 dissidents, it was announced here. No official reason was given, but sources said the Chancellor had indicated he did not wish to meet a man who was still the dissident problem had been settled in a positive way. Prague: Mr Alexander Dubcek, the former Czechoslovak Communist Party leader, is being prevented from receiving visitors by a police cordon set up at his home in Bratislava last Thursday, dissident sources said.—Reuters.

Foreign Secretary is dangerously ill

By David Spanier and Michael Harfield
The condition of Mr Anthony Crosland, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, who was admitted to hospital on Sunday showing signs of a stroke, gradually deteriorated yesterday. A bulletin issued by the Foreign Office last night said he was dangerously ill. Dr David Owen, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, has been asked by the Prime Minister to deputise. Mr Crosland, who is 58, was taken ill at his home in Adderbury, Oxfordshire, where since last Friday he had been working on official papers. The Foreign Office said last night that on Sunday morning Mr Crosland drove to Deddington to buy newspapers and went for his usual walk. He then resumed work on the papers. Mrs Crosland was in the same room when he said: "Something has happened." It was clear to both of them that it was some kind of stroke. Mr Crosland rang the doctor, who immediately came, and decided to bring in a consultant physician. After examination Mr Crosland was taken to the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford, by ambulance. Mrs Crosland travelled in the ambulance and has been with her husband throughout, the statement added. The Foreign Office said that, as is usual with indications of a stroke, Mr Crosland was placed under strict medical observation and continuing nursing care at the hospital. Mr Crosland has been working very hard lately, though colleagues feel that the strain is perhaps no greater than a minister in high office normally expects. Last Tuesday he took the chair at an EEC meeting in

Irish police squad accused of brutality

From Christopher Walker
The Irish Government yesterday found itself at the centre of accusations of police brutality against suspected republicans. The charges are similar to those that only last week it was levelling formally against Britain in the European Court of Human Rights. The allegations were made in the first of three articles about interrogation techniques of the Garda Síochána prepared by reporters from *The Irish Times*. Their publication after six weeks of intensive research is certain to lead to questions in the Dail and demands for an inquiry. In a front-page introduction *The Irish Times* said a special group of detectives known within the force as "the heavy gang" was using three of the methods that have been branded as torture by the European Commission on Human Rights. They are deprivation of food and water, restriction on sleep, and prolonged standing against a wall. The accusations are likely to intensify recent attacks against the Irish Government for hypocrisy as it is in process of attempting to persuade the European court to outlaw their use. The newspaper said severe physical beatings had become routine in the questioning of suspects about serious crimes. It covered in detail the case of a suspect who recently tried to commit suicide by jumping out of a Garda station window in Co. Tipperary. "These methods have evolved over several years and appear to have become more entrenched since the introduction last October of the Emergency Powers Act, which gave the Garda power to detain suspects for seven days. These conclusions are based on continued on page 2, col 3

Threat to end

Free
The first shots in what is certain to be a long and bitter battle over the European Commission's farm price proposals were exchanged here today by agricultural ministers of the nine. The Commission wants an average price rise of 3 per cent, coupled with adjustments in currency valuations. Britain's response, clear it considers the proposals too inflationary. But most of Britain's partners dismissed them as not generous enough. Mr Albert Lavenex, the Belgian minister, described them as "indefensible" and said they would lead to a loss of competitiveness. Before going into the meeting, Mr Gavin Strang, Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, claimed the Commission's recommendations would add about 2 per cent to British food prices. This would be on top of a further 2 per cent increase that would flow from the final stages in the alignment of British prices with higher EEC levels, to which Britain is committed under its Treaty of Accession. This estimate conflicts with the claim of Mr Finn Olav Gundelach, the Commissioner

Britain stands alone in farm price battle

for Agriculture, that the overall impact on British food prices, taking into account the final transitional steps, would amount to no more than 1.5 per cent while the cost of living index would rise by no more than 0.7 per cent. Mr Strang said he did not see how the Commission's proposals for a 6 per cent devaluation of the "green pound" could be justified "against the background of everything we are trying to do to control inflation in the EEC and the United Kingdom". The "green pound"—the rate used to translate the EEC's farm prices (fixed in units of account) into sterling—currently overstates the real value of Britain's currency by about 34 per cent. This has the effect of holding down the guaranteed prices paid to British farmers and the cost of food imports. After the meeting, Mr Strang called for maximum restraint in the fixing of prices. Herr Josef Ertl, the German minister, said that he found the Commission's proposals more realistic than in previous years. However they would mean a reduction in the earnings of German milk producers, and this was unacceptable.

'Nazi' gunman kills five

New York, Feb 14
At least five people, including a policeman, were killed today by a heavily armed man wearing a Nazi storm trooper's uniform after he took over a warehouse in New Rochelle, a New York suburb, and began firing at random. Police said three other people were wounded and they believed the killer was holding two hostages. He shouted out that he had "plenty of grenades and other guns and ammunition to last me all day".

Home Secretary defends parole for women

The Parole Board's decision to release Miss Anna Meudleson after only four years of a 10-year sentence for her part in the Birmingham bombings was defended by Mr Rees, the Home Secretary. He said that if there were any signs of reversion she would go back to jail. In the House of Commons the decision was criticised by Conservative MPs.

Open government

Mr Wedgwood Benn suggests that the public should be told more about Cabinet discussions at the time they take place instead of having to wait years after the event for information.

Leyland meeting

Labour MPs from the Birmingham area are to be asked by British Leyland shop stewards today to help in their struggle to return to free collective bargaining. Meanwhile, the firm is estimated to be losing £12m a day in lost car production, with 20,000 workers now idle.

Judgment delayed on bishop's appeal

The Rhodesian Appeal Court has delayed for 10 days, because of "pressure of work", its judgment on the appeal by Mrs Donald Lamont, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Umtali, against a 10-year jail sentence. His sentence was for failing to report guerrillas in his diocese.

22p loaf foreseen

A new round of bread price rises is in prospect with the three big firms, BEM, Spillers and Associated British Foods, applying to the Price Commission for a 1p increase on a standard loaf, taking the price to 22p in most areas. A further 1p rise could follow if the Government removes its 1p subsidy in the spring.

Skytrain licence

The Government has come round in favour of the Laker Airways Skytrain, which may now operate from April 1 with a single fare of about £60 between London and New York. The United States is to be asked to smooth Skytrain's path.

Police take journalist off Czech train

A journalist from *The New York Times* describes how Czechoslovak police ordered him off the Prague-Vienna express on Sunday night, held him incommunicado and confiscated documents in his possession. The material taken from him included a French translation of a statement attributed to Mr Alexander Dubcek, party leader at the time of the 1968 Soviet-led invasion.

Israel bribes case

Mr Asher Yadin, dismissed as head of an Israeli workers' sick fund, denies bribes from a lawyer who worked for the fund. He says he handed over millions to the country's ruling Labour Party for its election expenses after pressure from several leaders.

On other pages

Leader page 15
Letters: On the rise in railway fares, from Mr R. C. Le Neve Foster, and others; on overseas student fees, from the Vice-Chancellor of York University; on Cyprus, from Mr Francis Noel-Baker.
Leading articles: The Treasury; Ethiopia's warring factions.
Features, pages 8 and 14
Bernard Levin says it is right that Miss Anna Meudleson has been paroled; Shopping by Sheila Black.
Arts, page 9
Paul Ovey on Scottish art in London; Sheridan Morley talks to Stewart Baker and Jimmy Kennedy about *Spokenword*; concert notices by William Mann, Joan Clippell and Max Harrison.
Obituary, page 16
Mr Ebenezer Cunningham; Sir John Gilmour.
Sport, pages 10 and 11
Rugby: England bring in Rafter for *Test*; Football: League Cup semi-final prospects; Racing: Champion Hurdle favourite confirms status.
Business News, pages 17-22
Stock markets: The trade figures and pay policy doubts hit equities and the FT index closed 15.2 lower at 366.3, its worst day for over three months.
Financial Editor: Strong reserves needed in the market; overseas earners out of favour.
Business features: Roger Velevoe writes on the uncertainty for the future of the two-tier oil pricing system; John Earle looks at the threat of kidnapping that faces Italian businessmen.
Business Diary: The bankers who may have to hang up their ballet shoes.

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Two other addicts had just been discharged after recovering from similar overdoses. On their way out one told a social worker that they were going straight back to Piccadilly for more drugs.

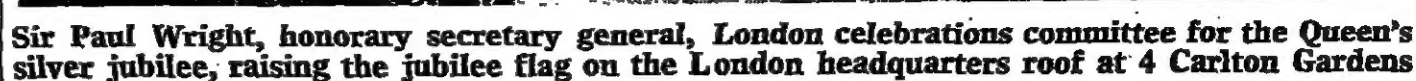
Once addicts have recovered there is little the hospitals can do but discharge them and try to inform the clinics of the registered ones. There is no rehabilitation service at present, and the only treatment on foot is planned. If more severe poisoning was an answer, it would be impossible at present. Police strength in the West End is strained, and they are powerless to do anything about barbiturates anyway.

Subway four presents a legal difficulty because part of it is recognized as a public place.

Officially Peter and others like him fall into a category of addict known to the Home Office as "habitual drug abusers." Both the Home Office and the Department of Health say that category presents the most serious difficulty on the British drug scene.

However, if treatment policies worked there would be fewer addicts in Piccadilly, and consequently fewer would reduce the crowd in subway four even more.

The appeal judges set aside her £30 fine and costs order.



sales of souvenirs to visiting children are being drawn upon. The organizers think they may have one ace card to play—the eventual operation of a horse drawn passenger barge service to and from Chester.

In the report of the "Save Our Cities" conference yesterday "communist representatives" should have read "community representatives".

Cologne. Six times every week at 09.25 hours, the clock at the City Hall indicates the departure of a Swissair plane for Switzerland.

Madrid. Every day at 08.00 hours, the clock of Puerta del Sol indicates the departure of a Swissair plane for Switzerland. And also at 15.50.

Prague. Five times every week at 09.45 hours, the clock of the Loreta Church indicates the departure of a Swissair plane for Switzerland.

Your IATA travel agency or Swissair will gladly give you further information, particularly about the best connecting flights to our world-wide route network.



All times shown are local times.
 Winter timetable 1978/77.
 Subject to change without notice.



SWISSAIR

All times shown are local times.
Winter timetable 1976/77,
subject to change without notice.

It was essential that they got renewal of the social contract. At the weekend the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Thatcher, made a speech at the Young Conservative conference which was an act of sheer political cowardice. She made no reference whatsoever to this.

The Bill was read a second time

WEST EUROPE

Technique of M Barre wins hearts of voters

From Charles Hargrove
Tarbes, Pyrenees, Feb 14

M Barre, the Prime Minister, set out today on another provincial tour, to meet, as he put it, "the deep France, the France at work, which concentrates on the national interest".

For this visit—the first last month was to central France where he concentrated on agriculture and local administration—the Prime Minister has chosen the south-west. He will be examining the problems of employment and vocational training there. The region is under-industrialized, and the income from agriculture is about one-third below the national average.

The Government's aim is to promote the development of medium and small firms and of the food industry, while helping with important regional projects like the extension of the harbour of Le Verdon, at the mouth of the Gironde, and the creation of a strong petrochemical industry.

M Barre emphasized that he had come to Tarbes because it was a medium-sized town which had succeeded in preserving the quality of its environment and where an especially successful effort had been made to promote adult training. But there are not enough outlets for young workers there and they have to migrate to other regions.

Today's programme took him to an adult training centre and gave him the opportunity to meet local officials, representatives of the municipality and of the professions both in Tarbes and in Mont de Marsan, the capital of the Landes. The reaction of men and women in the streets illustrated the success of the Prime Minister's personal approach, which has produced his startlingly high score in opinion polls in the past few weeks. Everywhere he goes, he listens with great attention and painstakingly explains the national problems. His manner differs sharply from the average vote-getting politician's. He does not strive for effect, but treats his audience as adults and tells them the truth about the situation.

While he was touring a training centre at Tarbes, some of the trainees he talked to said they wanted to stay and work in their home town. This gave M Barre a chance to preach the virtues of mobility of labour, which Frenchmen have skill to learn. One sign that the Prime Minister's anti-inflation plan is beginning to produce results is that the trade union organizations at first agreed to meet him and discuss their grievances, but in the end they decided not to.



Inspection of the North Sea catch of the Danish trawler Fenja Trosca conducted by Lieutenant-Commander Ken Brierley (left) and Lieutenant Chris Massey-Taylor to check for over-fishing inside Britain's sector of the EEC 200-mile zone.

Mulley warning that Nato military lead is being eroded by inflation

By Richard Davy

Mr Fred Mulley, the Defence Secretary, said in Munich at the weekend that Nato's margin of superiority over the Warsaw Pact "is being eroded as the Soviet Union's capability increases and as the defence budgets of the allies come under increasing pressure from inflation and competing social and economic priorities".

The resources available to members of the Western alliance, he said, were "much less than five years ago we hoped or expected they would be". At the same time ministries of defence faced higher costs for equipment and personnel. "The problems that are thereby posed for the allies", he said, "are thrown into relief by the continued growth in quality of the military capabilities of the Warsaw Pact. We are concerned not so much by the present threat but by the momentum of growth."

The Soviet Union was devoting about 12 per cent of its gross national product to military expenditure.

Mr Mulley was addressing the fourteenth international Wehrkunde conference, attended by politicians, officials and others concerned with defence matters. Among those present were Herr Leber, the West German Defence Minister, Senhor José de Medeiros Ferreira, the Portuguese Foreign Minister, and (significantly in view of Spain's interest in joining Nato) some Spanish officers.

Mr Mulley came in for criticism when he went on to say that he did not believe that "in the foreseeable future" the Nato governments would be persuaded to advance defence

expenditure to a higher priority than other spending programmes. An American senator said that if this was true it was "tragic".

Discussing ways of using limited resources more efficiently, Mr Mulley said it would be a profound mistake to rely more on nuclear weapons. He hoped for improvements in technology (though innovation was not cheap), some limited specialization and standardization (though some diversity was desirable) and for greater "interoperability" of equipment.

The rewards of substantive disarmament could be great, but "we shall need to see real evidence that the nations of the Warsaw Pact are actively committed to détente... excessive one-sided enthusiasm for détente could lead the West into disaster".

Newspapers hit by Netherlands strike

From Sue Masterman
The Hague, Feb 14

Two Dutch national evening newspapers, the *NRC Handelsblad* and *Het Vrije Volk*, failed to appear today as strike action spread further in the printing and other sectors of industry. The leading morning newspaper, *Algemeen Dagblad*, will not appear tomorrow and none of these papers will be able to print again until the strike ends.

Later in the week three more national dailies will disappear from circulation if a final agreement has not been reached.

Strike action is building up, as the unions planned, day by day. The only difference separating the unions and employers now is the question whether the real rise in income—over and above automatic compensation for the increase in the cost of living—will be the 1 per cent maximum offered by the employers or the 2 per cent minimum demanded by the unions.

More workers were called out today in the ports and on building sites. The CNV, the Christian trade union federation, representing a quarter of organized labour, has said that it will not ask members to support new strikes, since the issue which began the conflict eight days ago—automatic compensation for the rise in the cost of living—was settled at the weekend.

However, the Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions, which represents the rest of organized labour, claimed that CNV members supported today's new strikes.

Downing Street discussions for Dr Soares

By Our Diplomatic Correspondent

Dr Mario Soares, the Portuguese Prime Minister, arrived in London yesterday for talks with Mr Callaghan at Downing Street.

He was met by Dr David Owen, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, in the absence of Mr Crosland who was seriously ill. Dr Owen later attended the talks at No 10, with Dr Medeiros Ferreira, the Portuguese Foreign Minister. Dr Soares is making a tour of EEC capitals and after giving a press conference this morning flies on to Dublin.

Seveso decontamination efforts criticized

From Peter Nichols
Rome, Feb 14

Professor Arnaldo Liberti, head of the atmospheric pollution laboratory of the National Council for Research, in Rome today blamed the increase in the cases of the skin disease chloracne due to dioxin poison at Seveso on the lack of a proper effort at decontamination.

The attempt at decontamination of the houses by removing dust by vacuum cleaning and then washing walls and floors with water and detergents had no scientific validity. Moreover, it was moving the poison to other places.

He complained that he had offered the services of his laboratory to the regional authorities early in August but had had to wait until October before being allowed to carry out tests in the contaminated area. Dioxin could be destroyed by the sun's rays and by ultraviolet rays if it was on the surface, he said. His method was to fix the poison with a liquid fixative and then destroy it with ultraviolet rays. He had experimented with this method. He had a request for the results of his experiments from Professor Ton That Tung, of the University Hospital of Hanoi, a leading expert on dioxin.

OVERSEAS

Rhodesia court delays its judgment in appeal of Mgr Lamont

Salisbury, Feb 14.—Judgment in the appeal by Mgr Donald Lamont, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Umtali, against a 10-year jail sentence for failing to report black nationalist guerrillas in his diocese, will be given on February 24, the Rhodesian Appeal Court decided in Salisbury today.

Mr Hector MacDonald, the Chief Justice, said at the end of the hearing that the delay was due to pressure of work on the court.

The bishop, who is 65, is appealing against the sentence imposed on October 1 last year after he had pleaded guilty to four counts of failing to report the presence of guerrillas and of inciting others to commit the same offence.

During the hearing today Chief Justice MacDonald held lengthy discussions with the bishop's counsel on the Church's role in not involving itself in constitutional matters and on whether the guerrillas in Rhodesia were confirmed communists. The verdicts say they are Marxist communists and yet no one outside Rhodesia seems to recognize the fact, the Chief Justice said. "Is it not well known that the communists are against Christianity? Have we not had convincing evidence that terrorists have murdered missionaries?"

The bishop's counsel said the 10-year prison term with hard labour was "manifestly excessive" and noted that this was the first time the Rhodesian court had had to punish any one of the bishop's standing. There was no suggestion that the bishop had set himself up in opposition to the Government of Rhodesia, counsel said. But the bishop was opposed to the Government's racial discrimination policies and laws.

The judge said he understood the bishop's statements to be a general attack on the Government on the basis that it was not democratic. "Is that not



Mgr Lamont: 10-day wait.

purely a political matter?" he asked.

The state counsel said the sentence was not excessive when compared with sentences in similar cases, although he agreed that the case was "undoubtedly without precedent" in Rhodesia.

The state counsel also argued that the bishop had taken it upon himself to decide what the country's laws and went on to suggest that Mgr Lamont had shown sympathy for the terrorist cause.

After the hearing, Mgr Lamont said he was "not competent" to pass judgment on the legal argument. "I am not a politician. I have tried to make that clear. I am concerned with social justice and where there is no observance of social justice you prepare the way for communism," he said. "We must prevent communism by promotion of social justice. For that reason I am happy because my being brought to court gives the African people the real realization that the Church is serious in its intent to promote social justice as a basic element of its mission."—Agence France-Presse.

Britain to help 350 p Lusak

Salisbury, Feb 14.—The British Government has agreed to help 350 pupils of the Lusaka School of Theology in Zambia last week said here.

The parents who were Lutheran missionaries in south-western Rhodesia last week, have appeal in the Court to have returned to the country.

But the Rh ment said today action had failed to be taken under the law the High Court the Government matters," a spokesman said.

The tug-of-war of the continues with ing that "a n tives" have been Government h the release of Of the 400 p the Rhodesian have been l marched by a into Botswana, turned to their.

The other, a and 19 and incl 100 girls, were Botswana G Zambia as refu they would recruits in the of Mr Joshua bawwe African —AP.

Sri Lanka hit on newspaper

Colombo, Feb 14.—The Sri Lanka Government has imposed an indefinite ban in 1974, on inde papers, one of three newspaper publishes the E daily newspaper.

Syrian tanks close on refugee

Beirut, Feb 14.—Fears of a confrontation between Israeli and Syrian troops in southern Lebanon were allayed today when the Arab League peace-keeping force, mainly Syrian, was withdrawing from an area near the Israeli border. Eye witnesses said that about 300 Syrian troops had left Nabatiya, seven miles from the border.

The eyewitnesses reported that the Syrians had pulled back to positions round Habbouch, Hailoura and Aishia, which are respectively one mile north, 10 miles north and five miles north-east of Nabatiya. The Syrians never deployed inside the town, which is controlled by Lebanese leftists and their Palestinian allies. Reports from Israel said that the Syrian withdrawal was the result of quiet diplomacy. They quoted Mr Shimon Peres, the Defence Minister, as saying that he was glad the controversial issue was being ended through diplomatic means. According to sources close to the Syrian leadership, Syria had earlier assured the Israelis that it had no intention of provoking a confrontation with Israel in southern Lebanon.

The total strength of the Syrians in the Nabatiya area had been estimated at no more than 500 men and about a dozen Soviet-made T55 tanks. In Beirut tension ran high after the Arab peace forces surrounded Palestinian refugee camps on the south-west outskirts. Tanks, mortars and rocket batteries were brought in.

The move p tian fears th might be planni hard-line guerril Two Syrian M craft flew at lov camps. At least ching a Syria killed in two d last week betw troops and gu Popular Front: tion of Palestin mand.

Arab diplomat the Palestinian established cont peace force in defuse the situat tinians had asked to remove heavy the camps when of the guerrillas about 2,000—R

Argentina asked to explain fate of kidnapped girl

Stockholm, Feb 14.—The Swedish Government said today it had made several unsuccessful appeals to Argentina for help to secure the release of a schoolgirl kidnapped in a Buenos Aires suburb last month.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Dagmar Hagelin, aged 17, a Swedish citizen who is the daughter of an Argentine-born businessman, was visiting a girl friend when two armed men ordered her to come with them. When she tried to escape, they shot and wounded her. He added: "We have proceeded on the assumption that the men were from a military unit or had the backing of such a unit and that the Argentine authorities are thus responsible to see that the girl is freed."

He said that despite repeated requests through embassies, the only reply from the Argentine authorities was to tell the girl's father that she was still alive. "We are considering bringing up the issue at a higher level," the spokesman said without elaborating.

The Stockholm newspaper *Expressen* has suggested that the Argentine police or military are behind the abduction. It said witnesses had reported that one of the kidnappers was a local police corporal. The newspaper also said that neighbours thought Miss Hagelin's girl friend was a member of the Montoneros urban guerrilla group.—Reuters and AP.

Release of Basques raises hopes

Madrid, Feb 14.—Spain has released four Basque nationalists, the first of an estimated 200 political prisoners, in what their lawyers said could mean a widening of the amnesty.

However, government sources said a general political amnesty still had to be approved by the Cabinet. The release, at the weekend of the four Basque nationalists had been a decision taken by judicial authorities.

Opposition leaders, who were meeting Señor Adolfo Suarez, the Prime Minister, tonight for more talks on procedures for a general election later this year, were likely to raise the question of the prisoners' release.

The four Basques, arrested in 1974 and serving sentences of from six to 15 years, were set free in Madrid, Zamora and Cadix. This followed the police rescue last Friday of two top officials kidnapped by urban guerrillas and whose detention had been a major obstacle to an amnesty.

Their release surprised their families. Bilbao, Feb 14.—About 250 priests have signed a letter to the Pope asking him to set up an ecclesiastical province covering the Basque regions of both Spain and France. Church sources said today. Neither government respected the distinct personality of the Basques, the priests claimed.—Reuters.

Senor Cunha's Italian mission fails

Rome, Feb 14.—Senor Alvaro Cunha, leader of the Portuguese Communist Party, left by plane for Lisbon today after three days of talks that failed to bridge differences with Italian communists.

The two parties, however, promised to develop "friendly cooperation" along their different roads.

A communiqué said the talks between the leaders were marked by a "climate of cordiality, frankness and friendship".

Efta opens hunt for ways to beat recession

Stockholm, Feb 14.—The biggest meeting of the European Free Trade Association (Efta) ever held was declared open here today before 135 delegates and 11 observers from the seven member governments.

The delegates, representing governments, business and trade unions, will try during the two-day conference to hammer out a strategy to fight unemployment, weak economic growth and monetary instability.

There are a million people out of work in Efta countries.

Mexican leader sees Mr Carter

From Patrick Brogan
Washington, Feb 14

Senor José Lopez Portillo, the new Mexican President, was greeted by President Carter as a "close friend" when he arrived in Washington today at the start of a state visit.

This is the first official visit for either president and they both referred to its symbolic importance in their speeches on the White House lawn.

Mr Carter said that good relations with one's neighbours must be the basis of a sound foreign policy. His next visitor will be Mr Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister.

The two presidents will discuss the economic and political subjects usual on such occasions, but there is one real problem which might be too delicate for them to examine closely: the extensive illegal immigration of Mexicans into the United States. Estimates of the numbers of illegal immigrants from Mexico now in the United States range between six and eight million and the Immigration Department believes up to a million more come in every year.

Sanction breaking charged dismissed by Russians

Moscow, Feb 14.—The Soviet Union today sharply denied British charges that it had traded with Rhodesia through three Swiss companies, thus violating United Nations resolutions on sanctions.

Tass recalled the Soviet Union's "position of principle" toward the Zimbabwe (Rhodesian) people, and last week's denial by the three Swiss firms that they had been "a cover for socialist countries' trading operations with Rhodesia".

A reliable United Nations source confirmed on Friday that Britain last year accused the Soviet Union of

the Soviet Union today sharply denied British charges that it had traded with Rhodesia through three Swiss companies, thus violating United Nations resolutions on sanctions. Tass recalled the Soviet Union's "position of principle" toward the Zimbabwe (Rhodesian) people, and last week's denial by the three Swiss firms that they had been "a cover for socialist countries' trading operations with Rhodesia". A reliable United Nations source confirmed on Friday that Britain last year accused the Soviet Union of

Busing 'helps black pupils

From Peter Strafford
New York, Feb 14

Evidence that the busing of schoolchildren, designed to bring about a better racial balance in schools, can have good results for black pupils has been produced in a report by the Chicago Board of Education.

The report finds that a number of black children, aged between eight and 13 have improved their performance in reading and mathematics after attending predomi schools. The stand by white childre steady.

This report is piece of ammunition American controver merits or otherwise. It has been publish when the debate Chicago, the second in the United Stat that black leaders more racially segre any other.

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Mr Clerides has doubts about the Makarios-Denktaş formula but is ready to support it

From Robert Fisk
Nicosia, Feb 14

Mr Glafkos Clerides seems to be the last man to suggest that he will ever achieve high political office. Ask him whether he thinks he will become Vice-President of Cyprus if the Communists withdraw from the Makarios-Denktaş formula and the right-wing Democratic Rally—steps into the breach and he simply refuses to discuss the question. As Mr Rauf Denktaş, the Turkish Cypriot leader, was insisting yesterday that a future federal government of Cyprus should be secular, there are those among both Greeks and Turks who suspect that Mr Clerides just might have his eye on the chair of the head of state.

Put this point to him, remind him that Mr Denktaş has expressed admiration for him and that Archbishop Makarios has said privately that he would not object to his inclusion into the present Government, and Mr Clerides, a stout man with energy, will stare at you from the sofa in his office. He will remain completely silent, motionless save for the cigarette which he flicks up and down in his lips as he contemplates each question. But Mr Clerides is not quite that reticent. He agrees that if the forthcoming Vienna talks on a Cyprus bicomunal federal government are successful, he will move in to support President Makarios.

He expresses doubts, however, about the arrangements being made for refugees in Cyprus and about the vagueness of the instructions given to the Greek and Turkish Cypriot representatives who will go to Vienna. He is a lawyer as well as an opposition politician, and he pulls apart the known details of the Makarios-Denktaş talks last Saturday with almost lethal precision. "The talks", he says, "were a good development because it was the first time since 1963 that the Archbishop has talked to Denktaş. But the guidelines which they formulated for the negotiators in Vienna are a little vague. "They can be interpreted in various ways. A great deal will depend on whether both sides will give specific instructions so that the interlocutors do not waste their time arguing about what was meant. "For instance, they have said that the new central government of the federation shall be such as to ensure the unity of the state of Cyprus. . . . But is it going to be a Greek central government or a strong central government? Or will there be representatives of the two communities in the central government? "And 'freedom of movement', 'right of ownership', 'freedom of settlement'—these you can argue about for days. More specific instructions are going to have to be given by each side as to what the objectives are."

Mr Clerides's experience as a representative at the inter-

communal talks persuaded him that a federal state should be set up in Cyprus and he supported this idea as long ago as 1975. "Two years ago", he says, "I pointed out that the way things had developed after the coup (of Mr Nikos Sampson) and the Turkish invasion, the Turkish side would insist on a bizonal federal state and that if a solution was to be found, it would be on this basis. . . . And now the Archbishop has also moved from talking about the ratio of land to be held by one side or the other according to population percentages, towards wider criteria like land ownership listed in registries. Mr Clerides makes it clear—without actually saying so—that he believes President Makarios has made more concessions than Mr Denktaş in their talks. He believes that the refugees from northern Cyprus could be in serious difficulties. "If the resulting agreement meant that refugees would not be able to go back to certain areas, there is only one alternative—to compensate them. A fund will have to be set up and out of this fund, compensation will have to be paid. Several countries might contribute. He will not specify which countries he has in mind although Britain is almost certainly one of them. He denies that he wants to become a negotiator in any future talks, but he adds: "If the agreement on Cyprus is a reasonable and viable one and the Archbishop decides to accept it, then certainly we will support it."



Yugoslavia's premier: Mr Vese-
lin Djuranovic, aged 51, head of
the Montenegrin Communist
League, was yesterday named
Prime Minister of Yugoslavia.

Mr Djuranovic, whose appointment has to be confirmed by Parliament, will replace Mr Despal Bjedici, killed last month in an air crash. Mr Djuranovic's nomination was approved at a meeting of Yugoslav leaders, headed by Marshal Tito, at Igalo, in the south Adriatic where the Yugoslav head of state is staying. Another Montenegrin, Mr Dobroslav Culafic, is at present acting as Prime Minister.

Uganda plot 'foiled by arms find'

From Our Correspondent
Nairobi, Feb 14

President Amin today denied reports of a widespread purge in Uganda, but said two Ugandans were killed by security forces in Gulu, northern Uganda, when they resisted a search in which more Chinese weapons were found. He said the arms and ammunition were sent to Tanzania for the guerrillas in southern Africa, but were smuggled into Uganda at the instigation of former President Obote with the support of President Nyerere of Tanzania. His statement said Israel also supported the plot. Captured documents had revealed the names of all those involved, in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and other countries. His statement, broadcast by Uganda radio, said the first signs were discovered near the Kampala home of the Rev James Lwanga, Anglican Archbishop of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, on February 5. The President said a plot against his government had been foiled by the arms find. He said the Archbishop was named as a conspirator by some of those who had been arrested. He claimed more weapons were found near the house of another Anglican bishop at Tororo, on the Kenyan border. President Amin said four alleged ringleaders had confessed. Two of them were named as Mr Abdulla Anyuru, former chairman of Uganda's Public Service Commission and Mr Ben Ongom.

'New York Times' man tells of border harassment Czech guards hold US reporter

From Paul Hoffmann
Prague, Feb 14

Czechoslovak police ordered me off the Prague-Vienna express on Saturday night, held me incommunicado and confiscated notebooks, other papers and unused stationery. The material taken away at the border station of Ceske Velenice included the carbon copy and a French translation of a statement attributed to Mr Alexander Dubcek, the former Chief of the Czechoslovak Communist Party whose liberalisation experiment was ended by the Soviet-led military invasion of Czechoslovakia in August, 1968. The sign of Mr Dubcek's name, they have been the reason for the stern police action. The statement, already published by newspapers in Western Europe, quoted Mr Dubcek as denying a report in the Austrian Communist newspaper, Volkstimme, that he had refused to sign the Charter 77 human rights manifesto. Before I was requested to leave the train, I was searched and interviewed for an hour by three uniformed customs guards. The search and painstaking inspection of my luggage took

place in an empty first-class compartment with all curtains drawn, between the stations of Tabor and Ceske Velenice. When the guards read Mr Dubcek's name, they visibly stiffened and tensely continued examining the other papers with even greater attention. At Ceske Velenice a man in plain clothes joined the customs guards and told me to get off the train. While I proceeded to Vienna, officials in uniform and plain clothes again went through my luggage in a room of the station's passport control office. They also seized a three-page carbon copy of a typewritten article by Mr Levik Vaculik, a signatory of Charter 77. In the article, entitled "A Cup of Coffee with the Interrogator", the writer described how the police had questioned him. Other material confiscated at Ceske Velenice and not returned included copies of six of my dispatches from Prague that The New York Times published last week. English translations of two official Czechoslovak Government statements harshly condemning Charter 77 that I had been given by the Foreign Ministry in Prague on Thursday, and unused com-

pany stationery and envelopes. The notebooks contained records of interviews with Government officials, members of the Charter 77 group and other people in Prague. At the Ceske Velenice station, where I again was questioned, I asked to be allowed to make a telephone call to the United States Embassy in Prague or to Vienna, but the request was denied. I spent the night on a chair in an unheated room of the passport control office. A police captain in uniform apparently the station commander, said with a sneer: "Here you aren't in America." Released on Sunday morning, carrying my luggage, I walked for two miles past wooden watchtowers on the Czechoslovak side of the frontier into the Austrian town of Gmund. Coffee, offered by an Austrian customs inspector, tasted good after 18 hours without food and only water to drink. Then there was a wait for a taxi to Stocker. "New York Times News Service."

Washington, Feb 14.—The State Department said it would lodge a strong protest with the Czechoslovak Government

'Helsinki' woman free to leave Russia

From Our Correspondent
Moscow, Feb 14

A prominent member of the "Helsinki" human rights group set up by Soviet dissidents said today that she had been given permission to emigrate. Miss Lyudmila Alexeyeva, a historian who is 49, said that she had been thinking of leaving for some time and finally decided to do so last month. Permission came through only 10 days later, on February 1. "For once my personal plans coincided with those of the authorities. Usually they clash", she told reporters by telephone. The group was set up last May to monitor Soviet adherence to pledges on human exchanges and basic freedoms declared in the 1975 Helsinki declaration on East-West détente and human rights. Miss Alexeyeva was one of the founders of the group, which is now headed by her husband, Nikolai Viliyama, who is 50, and their son Mikhail, aged 23, had been told that they should leave by next Monday. They hoped to settle in the United States.—Reuters.

Two Norwegian diplomats expelled by Moscow

Moscow, Feb 14.—The Soviet Union today expelled a Norwegian diplomat and said another who left last year would not be allowed to return.

The move was seen as retaliation for Norway's recent expulsion of six Russians. The Norwegian action followed the arrest three weeks ago of a woman clerk at the Foreign Ministry in Oslo on charges of spying for the Soviet Union, Norwegian press reports said she had a love affair with a Russian.

Today, Mr Petter Graver, the Norwegian Ambassador, was informed that certain members of his mission were "engaged in activities incompatible with their status". He was told Mr Knut Mugas, a commercial councillor, must leave and Mr Kaare Hauge, a first secretary on assignment to Tokyo, would not be allowed to return.—Reuters.

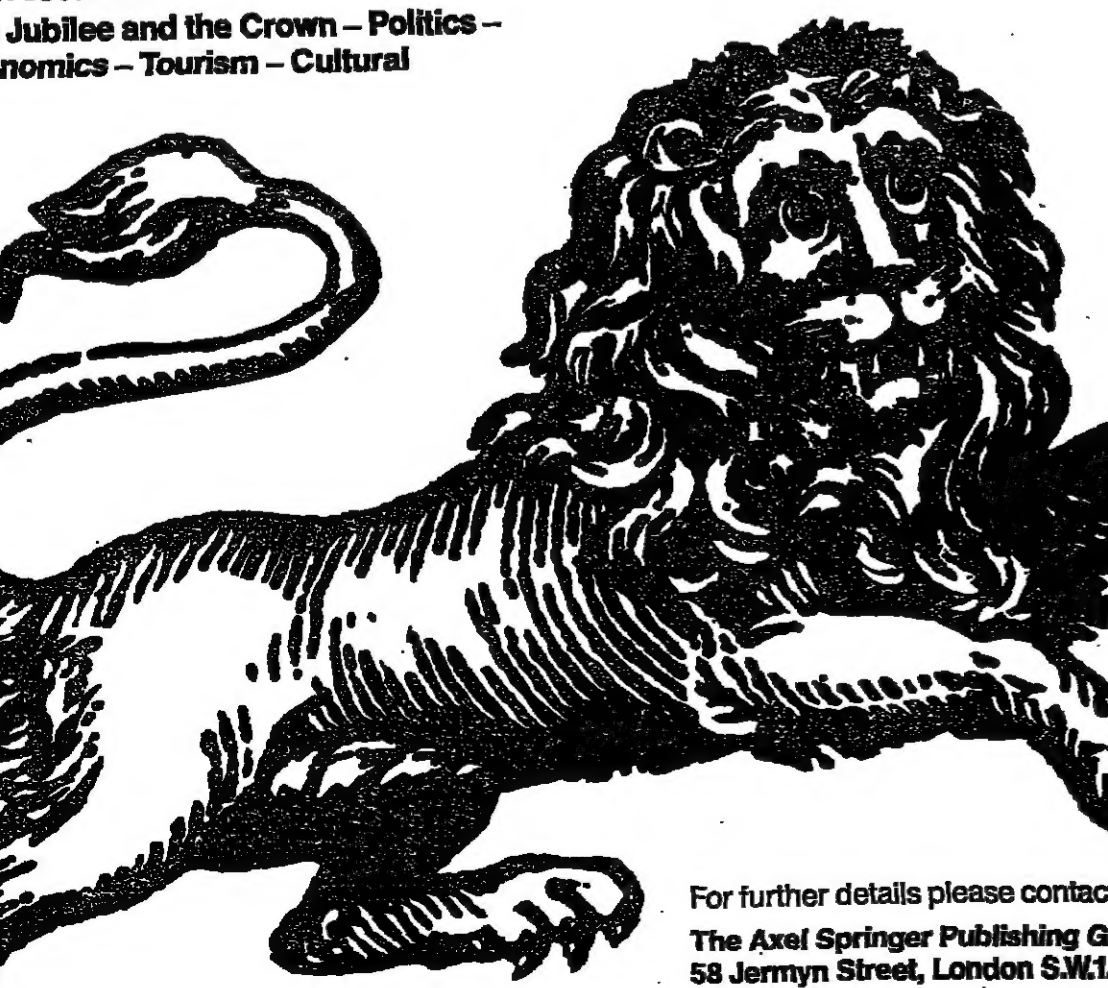
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Ethiopian troops open fire on demonstrators

Addis Ababa, Feb 14.—Signs of some ill-feeling towards the appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam as Ethiopian head of state emerged today in spite of warnings about strong repression of opposition.

Small demonstrations, involving mainly students, were reported from several parts of the country over the weekend. On Friday it was announced that the 39-year-old colonel had been made chairman of the ruling military council, the Dergue. Gunfire was heard from several areas where troops moved in, but there was only one report of some shooting at demonstrators. In other cases, troops were said to have fired into the air to disperse the protesters. A few posters have appeared in the city calling Colonel Mengistu a "fascist". Informed sources said there had been numerous arrests, particularly of students. Colonel Mengistu gave a warning in a weekend speech

that only genuine revolutionaries would have a place in socialist Ethiopia. He told graduates of the General military school: "To sit idle while our enemies are plotting against our revolution and unity, through the coordinated efforts of reactionary rulers in neighbouring countries under the patronage of imperialism, is to neglect our historic obligation." Informed sources said some of those involved in the shooting of demonstrators were members of the Flame Division, a new force trained for counter-insurgency but in part a defence unit for Colonel Mengistu and his Dergue colleagues. Although there have been minor protests by people apparently connected with the underground Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, there has been little sign of general public protest against the appointment of Colonel Mengistu.—Reuters.

Brazilian police torturing minors, lawyers report

Rio de Janeiro, Feb 14.—Two French lawyers have compiled a report in which they accuse Brazilian police of torturing common criminals and minors, as well as political prisoners.

In a dossier which the lawyers intend to send to the Inter-American Commission of Catholic Jurists of the Peace and Justice Commission of the Vatican, the lawyers single out the criminal investigation division in Sao Paulo as one of the worst centres of torture of common criminals and minors. "When the torture of minors becomes a routine in a country, it is a sign of the gravest human rights in that country", M. Joao Joazeiro said.

He and his colleague, M. Mario Deslauriers, described the report in which they accuse the police of torturing common criminals and minors, as well as political prisoners. Their request to have him examined by independent doctors was also rejected. The lawyers, who spent a week in Brazil, said the use of repression against political prisoners had been reduced generally, but only because repression had been circumvented by the Government to be less active. In areas where police used repressive methods, "the torture is practised with the same intensity and quality as before", they said.—Reuters.

300 on day trip to Antarctic

Sydney, Feb 14.—The first day trip to the Antarctic was organized yesterday. But the closest 300 tourists came to the ice-covered wilderness was 6,500ft above it in their Boeing

Forged sermons are circulated

Warsaw, Feb 14.—Booklets containing forged sermons of the Polish Roman Catholic primates had been circulating recently throughout the country, church sources said here.

The text of the forged sermons, posted mainly to priests, tries to make Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński appear a supporter of Marx and the communist authorities in Poland, the sources said.—Reuters.

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Law Report February 14 1977

Rent arrears paid by liquidator: no tax relief

Emmerson (Inspector of Taxes) v Computer Time International Ltd (in liquidation)

Before Lord Justice Buckley, Lord Justice Orr and Lord Justice Goff (Judgments delivered February 11)

For the purposes of computing allowable deductions from capital gains, a payment by a liquidator of rent in respect of arrears of rent made to a landlord in order to obtain consent to assign a lease does not enhance the value of the lease, nor can it be said to "preserve" the taxpayer company's title to it within the meaning of paragraph 4(1)(b) of Schedule 6 to the Finance Act, 1965. Further, paragraph 5(2) of the schedule operated to exclude the company from relief because the payment is rent which must be assumed to be made in respect of a fixed asset of a trade and thus deductible in computing profits.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing an appeal by the taxpayer company from a decision of the Special Commissioners allowing an appeal by the taxpayer company against an assessment to corporation tax in respect of chargeable gains on the disposal of assets.

Leave to appeal to the House of Lords was refused.

The taxpayer company, incorporated in 1969, carried on business hiring out computer time from leasehold premises in Oxford Street, London. The annual rental for the premises was £35,000. The business was not a success and it went into voluntary liquidation in April, 1970, at which time it was in arrears with the rent. On condition that all arrears would be met, the landlord agreed to assign the leasehold interest in the premises. The arrears were paid and the liquidator received a consideration of £93,155 from the new tenants. Appealing against an assessment to corporation tax for the year 1969-70, the company contended

that £5,131 of that sum was paid to the landlord for arrears of rent due after the date of liquidation and qualified as an allowable deduction.

Paragraph 4(1) of Schedule 6 provides that "... the sums allowable as a deduction from the chargeable gains on the disposal of an asset shall be restricted to ... (b) the amount of any expenditure wholly and exclusively incurred for the purpose of enhancing the value of the asset, being expenditure reflected in the state or nature of the asset at the time of the disposal, and any expenditure in establishing, preserving or defending his title to, or a right over, the asset". Paragraph 5(2) provides that "... there shall be excluded from the sums allowable ... as a deduction in the computation under this Schedule any expenditure which, if the assets were ... used as part of the fixed capital of a trade, would be chargeable to income tax would be allowable as a deduction in computing the profits or gains or losses of the trade for the purposes of income tax".

Mr Peter Whitehead for the company, Mr Peter Gibson for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE ORR said that the issue was whether the £5,131 was an allowable deduction in computing the capital gains arising from the disposal of the taxpayer company's interests in the premises in Oxford Street.

The payment did not fall within paragraph 4(1)(b) of Schedule 6 if it failed to qualify as a deduction; if it did fall within paragraph 4(1)(b) it was necessary to go on to decide whether it was disallowed as a deduction by paragraph 5(2) or (2).

To qualify under paragraph 4(1)(b) the payment must be expenditure incurred either wholly and exclusively for the purpose of enhancing the value of the asset or "in establishing, preserving or defending" title to, or a right over, the asset. The special commissioners had been satisfied that the liquidator's purpose in entering into the agreement with the landlord was to obtain the right to assign the lease and as such the payment did "enhance the value".

On the Crown's appeal from that decision, Mr Justice Goff held that it was not apt to describe the payment as "enhancing the value" but, without deciding the point, that it was possibly correct to say the payment "preserved" title because had it not been made the landlord could have taken proceedings. However, he did allow the appeal on the ground that the payment was rent coming within the express exclusion from allowable deductions in paragraph 5(2).

The first question in the company's appeal was whether the judge had been right in assuming that the payment was rent. Paragraph 4(1)(b) of Schedule 6, his Lordship said, that he did not find it possible to fit the performance of obligations under a lease into the paragraph. If a tenant in breach of covenants allowed premises to fall into disrepair they became less valuable; the tenant then effected repairs to the value of the premises would be restored but it would be a misuse of language to say that their value had been enhanced. The phrase expenditure incurred in "establishing, preserving or defending" title to an asset, applied to such matters as evicting a squatter or registering a lease, but had no application to the performance of a tenant's obligations under a lease.

The conclusion having been arrived at that the payment failed to qualify for deduction under paragraph 4(1)(b), it was not necessary to consider whether the judge had been right in holding that the payments were excluded by paragraph 5(2). However, the court did hear evidence on the point; his Lordship

said that his view was that the judge had been right. The company's argument was that the expenditure was not disallowed under paragraph 5(2) as the payment had been made with a view to disposing of the premises. But paragraph 5(2) required the assumption to be made that the assets to be treated as being at all times held or used as part of the fixed capital of a trade the profits of which were chargeable to income tax. Thus the premises must be assumed to have been used as such fixed capital up to the time of the disposal.

Mr Whitehead then, relying on Littlewood Mail Order Stores Ltd v McGregor (1969) 1 WLR 1241 and IRC v Land Securities Investment Trust Ltd (1969) 1 WLR 1241, limited the scope of the paragraph to the payment as being capital and not revenue expenditure. Those cases, however, had rightly been distinguished by Mr Justice Goff on the ground that in those cases new capital assets had been acquired; that was not so in the present case and no expenditure of a capital nature had been incurred in relation to the existing assets.

Finally, Mr Whitehead claimed that the taxpayer should be able to obtain relief either under the capital gains tax provisions or as a deduction under Schedule 6. He invited the court to construe paragraphs 4 and 5 so as to achieve that result. But the court's duty was to apply the terms of the statute and for the reasons given it was not possible to construe the provisions in the way suggested.

The remaining issue related to paragraph 5(1) and involved matters of accountancy practice, as to which there was no evidence before the commissioners. It was sufficient to say that the Crown had accepted that the burden was on it to show that subparagraph applied and it had failed to discharge it.

His Lordship would dismiss the appeal.

Lord Justice Goff delivered a concurring judgment, and Lord Justice Buckley agreed.

Solicitors: Kingsley, Napley & Co; Solicitors of Inland Revenue.

Court of Appeal

in some ways to a traumatic type of injury although it was different in that the physical injury could not be identified.

Through his delay Mr Davies had let the matter go to sleep for years. It was difficult to find evidence of the physical injury. It was on him that was an important matter—that he did not know before 1975 that he could sue for a claim against the defendants. It was clear from the evidence of the defendants that it would be extremely difficult to find a claim against them.

His Lordship thought that the defendants would be greatly prejudiced if the claim was allowed to proceed having regard to the lapse of time, and the particular way in which the claim was formulated, namely as a claim for back trouble partly, but not wholly related to an incident in 1970 which attracted very little attention at the time. His Lordship said that he would allow the claim to proceed on the basis that the claim was partly related to an incident in 1970 which attracted very little attention at the time.

His Lordship precluded his judgment by saying that he had just finished hearing a case in which a "fall from a ladder" had taken place in 1970, although he had not yet given judgment. The delay had not mattered because the police had taken statements at the time and reports had been prepared for proceedings that came on within a short time in the Crown Court. The attention directed towards that accident.

Solicitors: Lovell, Son & Pittfield for Robinson & Alfree, Ramsgate; Lacey & Co, Liverpool.

Queen's Bench Division

Limitation Acts difficulties in back injury cases

Davies v British Insulated Cables Ltd

Before Mr Justice Theobald (Judgment delivered February 4)

An employee's action for damages for a back injury alleged to have resulted from an unreported incident more than five years before, was stopped by Mr Justice Theobald on the hearing of a preliminary issue.

His Lordship refused to exercise the court's discretion to allow the action to proceed under section 2D of the Limitation Act, 1975, on the ground that "the evidence adduced or likely to be adduced would be less cogent than if the action had been brought within the specified time."

The action of Mr Idris Davies, aged 63, of Albert Street, Ramsgate, Kent, against British Insulated Cables Ltd, for damages for injuries alleged to have been caused by an accident at work in 1970, was dismissed as the writ was not issued within three years of the accident. It was issued on March 1, 1976.

Mr Justice Theobald said that about November 3, 1970, Mr Davies, with other men, was clearing a long pipe between laying a cable in it. The men pulled brushes attached to a rope through the pipe to remove any obstruction. The rope went over their shoulders. Mr Davies alleged that an obstruction in the pipe had stopped the rope suddenly and he tumbled over and injured his back. If the case continued Mr Davies would claim that there had been no report of an accident on November 3 and no statements were taken.

It was well known that cases

in which a back injury was alleged were difficult because, unlike the case of a traumatic injury, the time of the injury could not be pinpointed. Mr Davies would simply allege that his back injury had come on later, was partly due to the clearing of the pipe. If that sort of case was to be tried properly it must be tried at a preliminary issue.

Mr Davies did nothing about instituting a claim against the company, although he had obtained sickness and disablement benefits. He was not allowed to claim for injuries. He had worked for 40 years in the mines in Kent and it was difficult to believe that he was wholly ignorant of the possibility of suing an employer for an injury caused at work. Most people who knew that would collect evidence in order to substantiate their claim.

Mr Davies did nothing until 1975 when a fellow patient in hospital suggested that he might be able to claim damages. He then went to a solicitor. Prima facie the Limitation Act, 1939, barred his claim. The matter turned on section 2D of the Limitation Act, 1975, which provided: "(1) If it appears to the court that it would be equitable to allow an action to proceed having regard to the degree to which—(a) the provisions of section 2A ... of this Act prejudice the plaintiff; and (b) any decision of the court under this section would prejudice the defendant ... the court may extend the time for bringing the action ..."

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Bernard Levin

Why I am risking congratulations to the 'angry brigade' girl

I suppose there will be the usual cries of outrage at the release on parole of Miss Anna Mendleson, after she had served four years of the 10-year sentence imposed on her for her part in the 'Angry Brigade' bombings. Indeed, one such cry of outrage has already been emitted by a Conservative MP, who has said that people convicted of such crimes should not be released before they have served two-thirds of their sentences. (You would think he might have discovered by now that all prisoners are released after serving two-thirds of their sentences unless they have broken prison regulations and thus forfeited the otherwise automatic remission.)

There are many implications to be considered; but there is one that demands immediate attention. It is often said—by ministers, by judges and by the police—that our law makes, and should make, no distinction between "political" crime and any other kind; the motives of the criminal may be taken into account in sentencing, but they play no part in determining guilt, and one who commits a crime actually or ostensibly to further some cause in which he believes is in exactly the same position as one who does so for personal gain. The judge in the terrorist trial which ended last week put it clearly when he said to the jury, commenting on the claim by one of the accused that it was a political trial:

It is not. The political views of these defendants are no concern of ours. We do not have political murders by any more than we have political rape or political bigamy.

That is a view which I imagine would commend itself to most of those who support heavy sentences against terrorists. But it is very logical to insist that "political" crimes must be treated like other crimes, and then to demand that "political" criminals must be treated differently. In fact there is a case for a radical change in our law, entailing a recognition of a distinction between two types of crime, and I shall have something to say on the subject in a moment; yet while the law does not look more leniently upon a crime committed for a disinterested political motive, but refuses to consider the provenance of the crime, it should not be invited to start considering the provenance once the criminal is in prison, in order to look more harshly upon it. (The judge imposing last week's sentences recommended that the convicted men should serve a minimum of 30



Miss Anna Mendleson: outrage there will be, but her release is as good an instance as can be imagined of the Parole Board exercising its functions wisely, humanely and fruitfully.

years, but it was quite clear that this was because of the appalling nature of the crimes—murder, wounding and kidnapping—not at all because they were IRA terrorists. If you doubt that, reflect upon the sentences the train robbers received.)

That said, we must address ourselves to the main question: should Miss Mendleson have been released? Yes, of course she should. In the first place, let us remember that she has been released on parole, not unconditionally. If she commits any further offence during the currency of her original sentence (less the period that would have been remitted) she can, and almost certainly will, be returned to prison. Moreover, although the Parole Board does not publicly give reasons for its recommendations, it is clear that its members take into account such matters as the extent of any reformation that has taken place, and they surely must have done so in this case. Furthermore, the board's

recommendations are advisory only: the Home Secretary has to be satisfied that there is no unacceptable risk to the public in authorizing a release on parole, and he would have been particularly careful in a case of this kind, even if only because a further bomb planted by Miss Mendleson would, whatever other damage it did, blow him out of office. (Incidentally, it is worth recording the fact that in none of the bomb attacks for which she was sentenced was any person killed or injured.) And the fact that she is the only one of the group sentenced for the same crimes to be released strongly suggests that she has become eligible for parole because of her own qualities, and not merely because she has served four years in prison.

In other words, this seems about as good an instance as can be imagined of the Parole Board exercising its functions wisely, humanely and fruitfully; indeed, even the Home Office appears to have caught the spirit of the recommenda-

tion, in conceding the news of her release (which took place last November) although—perhaps feeling that the shock induced by such charitable conduct on their part (obviously it would be more difficult for Miss Mendleson to start a new life with real hope of success if she was immediately the centre of sensation and gossip wherever she settled) might prove fatal to experienced Home Office spokesmen felt obliged to deny that there had been any such generous and sensible action on the part of his department.

Of course, many people will feel angry at the news, particularly coming so soon after the trial of those responsible for the terrorist murders of Professor Hamilton-Fairley and Ross McWhirter and other vile crimes; but one of the functions of parole boards and Home Secretary is to resist the implications of that anger even while giving it to her on their courage and good sense.

who has long been eligible for parole, might by now have received it if it were not for the immense clamour that her release would provoke. Parole is provided for those who have shown in prison that they are no longer a danger to society; public horror at their crimes should play no part in parole decisions, but I fear it does.

It is strange that, despite the unceasing flow of evidence that imprisonment is just about the most uneconomic and unsuccessful method of dealing with crime ever devised, we seem unable even to contemplate seeking alternatives. And when the Parole Board, itself representing only the feeblest attempt at mitigating the absurdity of imprisonment, does the job it exists to do, it is criticized for doing it in the case of one who acted not from greed of gold but out of an idealism which, however hideously warped, was nonetheless real.

There is a case for changing the law so that we do have different categories of crime, one of which would be in effect political. Mr Vladimir Bukovsky, who has some claim on the world's attention when it comes to the status of political prisoners—and we should remember that the Soviet authorities, too, insist throughout their persecution of him that he was an "ordinary" criminal—has been arguing this very thesis: he says that not until free countries distinguish between public and private crime, crimes against individuals, crimes done for gain and crimes done for altruistic causes, will any real progress be possible in affecting the use of criminal law against dissidents in unfree countries. We may reject the argument, or say that it is inapplicable here, though I for one begin to believe that we shall not destroy IRA terrorism until we make some attempt to see the terrorists as they see themselves. (And, after all, if we did distinguish political crime from other crimes, it does not follow that it should be treated more leniently; we might even impose harsher penalties for it rather than milder ones.)

But that is another consideration. The main point I wish to make is the limited one: the Home Secretary's decision to accept the Parole Board's recommendation, and that of the Parole Board in making it. He, they and I will be proved very seriously mistaken if Miss Mendleson is shortly found planting bombs again; but unless and until she is able to live a normal life, free from the implications of that anger even while giving it to her on their courage and good sense.

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Lord Chalfont

Sharing responsibility for w Mr Carter signs in Moscow

One of the best-loved new publications in Jimmy Carter's America is a pocket dictionary called *How to Speak Southern*, a book dedicated to all Yankees "in the hope that it will reach them how to talk right". One of its definitions is of the word *perjury*, a winking instrument. "Some rob you with a six-gun and some with a fountain penum." Many Americans believe that they are in some danger of being robbed when the President takes his fountain-pen to Moscow and starts signing his autograph on pieces of paper (though, actually, provided for him by Mr Brezhnev).

Among the most vivid and articulate advocates of this point of view are two retired officers—Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, formerly Chief of the Naval Staff, and General George Keegan, until recently head of Air Force Intelligence. Admiral Zumwalt occupies a penthouse suite with a view across the Potomac River to Watergate—"An ideal place," he says with disarming self-mockery, "for planning a march on Washington." He is especially concerned about the growth of the Soviet navy, and believes that the Russians have already achieved a degree of mastery in the Atlantic which would seriously affect the ability of the United States to supply and reinforce western Europe in time of war. General Keegan, who has served in the Soviet Union, is now superior to the West in every aspect of the military balance.

These are not wild men of the right or rabid cold warriors—they are careful, thoughtful professional service men, with a long experience of their trade. They are convinced that the Soviet Union is embarked upon the pursuit of world domination, for which a massive accumulation of armed strength is an essential instrument. Their views are often reflected in the Senate notably by the Republican Senator Barlett and the Democratic Senator Nunn, who have expressed the view that Nato planners are now seriously overestimating the amount of warning they might expect of a Soviet attack. The opposite school of thought is reflected in the views of Senator Frank Church and Congressman Les Aspin, who believe that the Soviet threat is being grossly exaggerated to preserve the vast resources of the military establishment.

Somewhere in between are to be heard the measured voices of such mandarins as General Alexander Haig, the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General George Brown, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Donald Rumsfeld, Defence Secretary in the last administration, and in the eyes of many shrewd observers, a future Presidential candidate. Their view is that to deny the existence of the Soviet threat would be myopic and irresponsible; but to dramatize it in urgent and dramatic

terms leads to panic and despair rather than to a calm assessment of what should be done to meet it. Dr Kissinger himself adds a refinement to the argument; he believes that the fears of Soviet superiority in strategic nuclear weapons are based upon a fallacy, and that they distract attention from the very real threat which exists outside the nuclear context. "The essence of the contemporary problem in the military field," he says, "is that the Soviet 'superiority', which is based on both sides will be in the tens of millions, has practically no operational significance so long as we do what is necessary to maintain a balance."

The men of the new Administration are, so far at any rate, keeping their heads below the parapet. Yet it is possible to predict with some degree of confidence the line which they will take. Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State, Harold Brown, the President's recent nomination as Head of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Marshall Shulman, Vance's advisor on Soviet affairs, are all men of high calibre, all experienced in the field of national security and all convinced of the inherent dangers of the arms race.

The only unknown factor in the equation is Mr Brezhnev. Carter's special assistant for national security affairs, Zbigniew Brzezinski, rather predictably referred to as "Carter's Kissinger", once had a reputation as a cold warrior, ready to confront the Soviet Union. This is, however, no facile to be a useful description of a man who virtually defies political classification, and whose brilliant, provocative and polymathic intellect seems able to occupy simultaneously positions so far apart that less supple minds would have to commute between them.

In spite of the nuances of rhetoric in the debate on foreign policy, it is possible to discern a significant consensus. Everyone agrees that the military situation of the Soviet Union is increasing; there is general acceptance, too, of the thesis that the reason for the massive accretion of military power is not so much to achieve a war-winning capability as to acquire the power to impose the will of the Soviet Union on international affairs—the ability to pose a credible threat of overwhelming strength in the pursuit of political and diplomatic ends, to be so brutally and evidently powerful that it will be possible to win without going to war.

The main differences of opinion concern the reason for the build up, its rate of acceleration and the nature of the western response. Some believe that the United States and its allies are already in grave danger and that urgent measures are needed to match the Russian build up for the missile for missile and ship for ship. Others, however, believe that the build up is a bluff, and that the Soviet Union is in a position to put forward positive

ship. Others can build up their momentum of power in the 19 Soviet Union feel a powerful Unit an awakening suggest that the as troubled by as the American that is needed is overtone from the again there is a held by those convinced that the our what Russian is to carry on : constructive d them.

President Carter of effort on arms control assumes a tremor in this co Russian responds the way will be a really serious att: problem of arms race; if United States are forced to the, their security i risk; there will be pressure to tial resources defence and to arms race which run can only end conflagration.

United States Command in plan weapons systems ensure the "sur the American n forces in the bomber and Mi Soviet Union in reasons for mea at least half way. If the Presiden lack judgment o both, and makes the Soviet U achieving any in : risk; there will be pressure to tial resources defence and to arms race which run can only end conflagration.

There is, unless misleading us, so he will listen. It was, after all, Carter who said he had no greater decisions than t are, he said, a must share the The President sh those words in i some prominent desk in the Ora can, it has been my fountain pen (Conclud

© Times Newspa

Workers on the board: are we misreading the European experience

One of the disturbing features of the majority Bullock Report is the impression it gives that its proposals are in the mainstream of European thinking, and that they have a kind of "wave-of-the-future" inevitability about them, especially in the context of our membership of the European Community. There is reason to think this argument carries much weight in Whitehall.

Since I was closely concerned with these matters until last year, as the European Commission's director-general for social affairs, it might be useful to set out the facts as far as the Continental position is concerned.

First, of the nine member-countries of the European Community, only four have introduced legislation for co-determination (worker representatives on boards of directors). These are West Germany, Netherlands, Denmark and Luxembourg. Italy is introducing it in the public sector, but not in the private.

In two other countries, Italy and Belgium, no legislation has been considered, and in neither

country has the debate really got started. In France, the Sudreau Report, published two years ago, proposed a wide measure of company law reforms including co-determination. A much more impressive and wide-ranging publication than Bullock, it attracted initially a broad measure of public interest. Much of that support has now ebbed away as the political situation in France has polarized, and it now looks as if the government will legislate only on comparatively peripheral aspects of the report, and not on the co-determination proposals.

Second, in those EEC countries where co-determination has been introduced, it has been on the basis of the two-tier board which the majority (but not the minority) Bullock Report explicitly rejects. It is true that, outside the EEC, worker directors have been introduced onto executive boards in Norway and Sweden though in the latter case in a much more modest and tentative form than Bullock proposes.

Third, what about the European Commission itself? It is quite true that the Commission has for some years been com-

mitted to securing the long-term harmonization of EEC company law, including co-determination. It first became interested in this subject at the end of the 1960s, when Jean-Jacques Schreiber published *Le Défi Américain*, in which he said that American multi-nationals would take over the commanding heights of European industry unless the Europeans could themselves create multi-national companies of comparable size and strength, and for this to happen the legal obstacles to EEC cross-frontier mergers would have to be overcome.

In response to this demand, the Commission produced its blueprint for the European Company, an optional structure which companies in the EEC could adopt in place of existing national company legislation—thus facilitating mergers between companies of different nationalities in the EEC.

The German government insisted that the European Company should contain provisions for co-determination not less ambitious than those in existing German company law, fearing that otherwise there might be a mass exodus of large German companies out of German national law into the new European option, thus evading the requirements of co-determination and embittering relations between the German Government and its unions.

So the draft European Company statute, which has still to be approved by the EEC Council of Ministers, provides for a two-tier board, and for one-third of the members of the supervisory board to be elected from the shop floor (not necessarily through official trade union machinery, as Bullock specifies).

This is closely in line with the pre-1976 German model, except that the European Company statute requires that, of the supervisory board, the shareholders should appoint one part and the other part should be jointly chosen by the shareholder and employee appointed directors. This is similar to the Dutch *Wet*, and the Bullock "2x plus 9" formula is plainly modelled on it.

The European Company statute is still the Commission's preferred model for eventual harmonization of company law, though it is a purely optional arrangement for any

company which for various reasons wants to opt out of national company legislation. One of its two basic principles, the two-tier board, is adopted by the Bullock minority report but rejected by the majority.

The second, the constitution of the supervisory board, goes further in the direction of worker representation than the Bullock minority would wish, but not as far as the majority recommends.

More far-reaching in its implications than the European Company statute was the draft Fifth Directive on the harmonization of national EEC company law, prepared by the Commission in the early 1970s. It soon became clear that there was no prospect of an early consensus on these proposals (which bore a close relationship to the European Company statute in content), given the diversity of views in the different EEC countries, not only at governmental level but also among the main trade unions—the Marxist union movements, which dominate in France and Italy, being inexorably opposed to participation in the management of capitalist enterprises.

They had three shopping trolleys loaded with missives signed by 100,000 women in- tended for Leonid Brezhnev. As the signatures had been collected by the International Women's Year two years ago and had vainly awaited Brezhnev's planned visit ever since, it was decided to unload them yesterday on the cultural attaché at the Soviet Embassy.

A delegation of five, including Cleo Laine, Margaret Drabble and the young Labour MP Helena Rayman, was chosen for the job. In the confusion of having their photographs taken with some 70 other women, sombrely dressed in black, who turned out in support, they set off up the embassy drive without their trolleys.

Another group, including the writer Elisabeth Jane Howard, had to get permission from the attendant police to push the trolleys in pursuit. Meanwhile from a deserted tailor's shop over the opposite side of the road, campaign supporters were trying unsuccessfully to telephone Soviet Jews in Russia.

An hour later the delegation returned, still carrying their petition for their push carts. The Russians had been "very charming" (Cleo Laine) and "utterly reasonable" (Margaret Drabble) but had insisted that they should not leave anything behind when they left.

The telephonist at last got

The Times Diary

How the young wrong-doers live

The casual reader happening upon *The Delinquent Way of Life*, a book to be published this week, could be forgiven for showing signs of alarm and despondency. Here, among nicely balanced academic arguments and calculations of statistical significance to two decimal places, are transcripts from taped interviews in which aggressive young men talk truthfully about smashing bottles over people's heads or "giving them a right hiding" with the aid of knives, coshes, razors and axes.

The book is the third report of the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, in which some 400 boys from a working class area of London were first studied at the age of eight, and then re-interviewed at intervals over the next 14 years. By the time they were 21, when the study ended, almost 30 per cent had a criminal record.

That did not surprise the researchers, Dr Donald West and Dr David Farrington of

the Cambridge Institute of Criminology. Nor did their finding that by far the greater part of the delinquent activity went undetected, and far out- ran the number of officially recorded offences.

What did surprise them was to find that there really was a distinctive delinquent way of life. Against their expectations their survey endorsed, point by point, the establishment view of the delinquent character. Delinquents smoke, gamble and drink more heavily, are more immoderate in their sexual habits, drive more recklessly, are often spendthrifts and are unlikely to hold down a job with prospects. They are also more likely to affect dress styles and ornaments, such as tattoos, associated with anti-establishment attitudes.

"We did not expect delinquents to be so significantly different in their habits from their unconvicted contemporaries," says West, "but we were proved wrong."

More discouraging, was the

discovery that conviction for an offence, far from being remedial, was likely to aggravate the offender's subsequent delinquency. By contrast youths who broke the law but got away with it were likely to behave better in future.

"What is worst about that," says West, "is that we cannot tell exactly why it should happen. Punishment might be thought to make them bolder, but talking to the boys themselves they do not seem to think they have suffered much. There is the idea that the stigma of a conviction leads to worse behaviour, but it is difficult to believe the stigma carries such force when so very many people have it."

"My personal opinion is that a lot of juvenile delinquency is relatively trivial compared with the large amount of time and money spent in the official processes intended to deal with it. Delinquency is very often associated with a background of adverse social conditions. We might have more success if we did something about those conditions rather than trying to deal directly with the delinquency itself."

The book concludes with recommendations for concentrating welfare assistance on the educationally retarded offspring of large, poor families in which the survey finds, recidivist delinquency persists from generation to generation. "But in the present economic climate,"

West says ruefully, "one must be pessimistic about the chances of any social programme that is suggested being implemented."

Football crowd

Philip Core is sharing his Holland Park flat with the Queen's Park Rangers football team, soon to be joined by 11 Watford players, a streaker, two policemen, a referee and linesmen, and our shopping correspondent, Sheila Black. Core is EC artist, and is working on an exhibition about a football match simulated with life-size figures cut from half-inch plywood.

He works from photos of matches and players, but is pleased with the likenesses he gets. The plywood Stan Bowles was taken on a tube train recently for publicity purposes, and was acclaimed by small boys.

"I like to paint figures and people flying through the air," said Core, "but there is no room to be much point in doing gods and angels now." His ambition eventually is to have each football stadium topped with a pantheon of the club's great players.

Meanwhile Goal, the present exhibition, will be on show at the Camden Arts Centre in July. Elton John, the chairman of Watford, is said to think the idea is great, and Sheila



Black is to be featured because, as the QPR fan that she is, she introduced Core to the team.

With love

Few Valentine's Day messages can have been as troublesome to deliver as those the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry were trying to send yesterday.

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through to a woman waiting at Leningrad Post Office, who had first applied for an exit visa in 1971. The women took turns to give her messages of encouragement and support, for which she returned thanks.

"The terrible thing is," said the campaign organizer, "we spoke in her two years ago, but nothing has changed. We can only keep plugging away at it."

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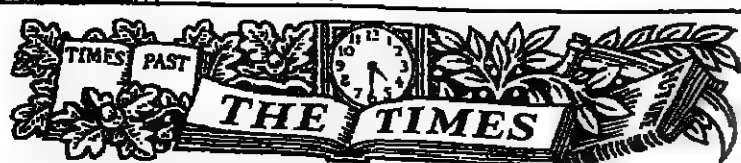
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Well you know me, them all still going on, camels and these walking three paces to the eyelashes in a last this morning's sander and he said i that at all except i the country districts, super frocks are so my dear, £200 to £400 know they have sim loot and dear Yuki 60 dresses with him. Actually, my treat, just a teeny suspicion sweet little man is ti to Newcastle, or oil or whatever they say simply everybody y body out there just that super plane wid nose and dashes up and Hollingsworth need a new little coc her, or even when i Must dash, darlings, a date with a Seifridges.

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ILL-INFORMED MYTH

Haines may or may not be about his fellow "ars" in Sir Harold Kitchen Cabinet. But turns his attention to us business of government distinct from the backs of backstairs politics, early and risibly out of

urgitates the most facile about relations between and officials as though some important new to what he portentously "Politics of Power. The he is merely treading arm foot-prints planted late Richard Crossman, sctly acted out his own preconceptions about ll, adds neither authority inality to Mr Haines's polemic.

lea that officials dispose s power and conspire, together, to force the of well-meaning but t ministers to pursue against their wishes and judgment is a false zation of a much more ted web of less sensa- tions.

governments have ly little power; and what ive is comprehensively through the machine so, individual or set of als, not even the highest, luence events to any ie degree. The life of an as of a minister, is g series of desperate ats to escape from well- olerable choices between as, of Parliamentary and opinion close in about

dly, the almost obses- reoccupation of officials a "will of the minister" more of a danger, that ill be too inde- . Any minister who fails full and firm charge of argument as to build on d of goodwill, dedication s only that is available to s only himself to blame, as not hear any complaints in Churchill, the British Macleods about over- officials although they ll have received advice me to time with which

they strongly disagreed. They made up their own minds and knew how to deal with any hint of disloyalty.

Thirdly, the basic source of perfectly legitimate conflict between ministers and officials lies in their different roles. Politicians are supposed to express the yearning of those who elect them. These yearnings commonly add up to physical, and indeed often logical, impossibilities. You cannot spend the national income twice over. You cannot pay everyone more than everyone else.

It is the duty of officials to draw these disagreeable facts to the attention of those politicians who come into office. The su- ccessful power of officials is no greater, indeed too often much less, than the power of the facts of life. The cheaper kind of politician, like a child or an antique potentate, often finds it convenient to vent his frustration on the adviser who points to his nakedness; and the stuperid commentator treats the politician's outbursts as insights.

Fourthly, some departments tend quite naturally and properly to have views on the main policy questions with which they deal, although in some notorious cases these have degenerated into crude lobbying on behalf of the particular interests, notably the aircraft industry and agriculture, which they regard as their clients. But the power of officials in such departments is no greater than their power to persuade a free and sovereign minister who does not even have to give reasons for over- ruling the advice he receives. Churchill was not tricked into returning to the gold standard in 1925. He was out-argued after very forceful exchanges with his advisers.

Fifthly, for Mr Haines to allege that the Treasury conspired in the summer of 1975 to force the Cabinet's hand over incomes policy, by allowing the pound's price to fall below the level at which middle eastern countries would start selling heavily, shows how little he knows of either history or the Treasury. For a start Sir Harold Wilson now goes round assuring anyone who will listen to him that he came back from Jamaica in January, 1975, with his plans

laid for imposing an incomes policy in the summer. The Chan- cellor's speeches, starting in Leeds in the same month, were preparing the same ground.

Moreover, when it was decided—by the Chancellor and the Prime Minister, not officials—to let the pound slide in the early summer of 1975, it was the trades union conferences, not the Cabinet, on which they were trying to put pressure. The sugges- tion that Treasury officials concealed from ministers the selling intentions of the middle eastern states could only be made by someone with no knowledge of the working methods and ethic of the Treasury and by someone who does not even remember that the Chancellor and the Foreign Secretary, who presumably informed the Prime Minister, both knew from per- sonal contact exactly what the Gulf States thought.

The constitutional position is both crystal clear and entirely sufficient. Officials propose. Ministers dispose. Officials execute. None of them have any power in the old-fashioned sense of arbitrary sway; and they seldom even have much influ- ence on events. Officials are loyal to a fault, sometimes too timid in advising and occasionally incom- petent in execution. Ministers are at the focus of all the incompatible demands of modern society upon itself. They are frequently over-optimistic and unrealistic; and they are some- times weak in either brain or character.

There may be some merit in Mr Haines's unoriginal sugges- tion that ministers should be able to appoint more special advisers of their own choice. But the purpose of such a system, which is already developing quite fast, with some well-known disastrous misadventures, should be to help ministers with their political work, with their collective responsibility for the activities of their colleagues and to keep them in touch with their parties. It should not be, as Mr Haines suggests, to conduct an idiotic and unnecessary battle with the abler and loyaller servants already provided by the taxpayer. It is not, after all, Sir John Hunt, who is selling the reputation of his former chief.

IOPIA'S WARRING FACTIONS

Mengistu Haile-Mariam formally stepped into the shoes of the three previous heads of state—the late General Andom and the late Emperor Haile Selassie—whom he had replaced or caused to be replaced. His only remaining rival, Colonel Abate, who happened to be at the meeting of the council when the shoot- ing place on February 2, need to take over military on in the field, leaving a Mariam to handle the ion, and the counter-revo- in Addis Ababa. So many reasons have been made in the Terror and the an revolution, not least biopians, that it may be ng to reserve for him the Napoleon vis-a-vis Robes- but the prospect looks ul. Colonel Abate's cam- against the Eritreans has r shown little sign of y genius.

opia is ringed with hostile d inside it Colonel 's 27,000 troops face some guerrillas fighting for five t secessionist causes, and is said to be a royalist force field. Morale is declining, have been desertions, rders in outlying towns and points. General Teferi before his removal was g for sacrifices and warning in the whole area of the of Africa and the Red Sea

region, only South Yemen was friendly to the regime.

Colonel Mariam has now announced that the army is to be enlarged, though he will find himself short of experienced senior officers after so many purges. He has also promised the latest weapons. Hitherto arms have come from the United States, which has been inclined to ration them as the seces- sionists capture them, the revo- lution grows bloodier and anti- American demonstrations more strident. It now seems that the Dergue has been trying to turn to the Russians for arms.

Colonel Mariam was believed to favour that course, which the reorganization of the govern- ment in December was perhaps designed by Teferi Bante to check. The two "moderate" officers who designed the new structure, Captains Wolde- Michael and Alemayehu, were slaughtered with Teferi Bante. But there seems little reason for the Russians to arm the Ethio- pians on the scale that would enable them to defeat their enemies, even if it were possible, though they may play Colonel Mariam along to see if he can survive as the emergent dictator. They are committed to the Somali and have little incentive to offend the other left-wing contenders in the region. The Russians may also be glad to see American influence finally extinguished, but the role of sole

arbitrer in such a fractured and factious region will tax even their ingenuity to play everyone against everyone else. The secessionist parties would raise an outcry if they came to the aid of "Amharic imperialism". Moreover the underground anti- Dergue, and anti-Mariam party in Addis Ababa, the Revolution Peoples' Party, claims to be more purely Marxist-Leninist than anybody else, and has sworn to fight for twenty-five years to prevail.

It looks, therefore, as if Colonel Abate will do very well if he can hold his positions against the secessionists, particularly in Eritrea and on the borders of Somalia. He would certainly not do so if the Eritreans were united as they are now. They have not found a political compromise and now openly fear a premature victory that would then be followed by a war between themselves. The fighting and assassinations, the executions and deaths in prison continue, and there seems no end to it. Ethiopia however survives because the mass of the people are peasants who as far as possible ignore the rival armies and warlords, much as the peasants did in the China of the twenties, and they are helped, and so is Colonel Mariam's treasury, by a big expansion in the production of coffee at record world prices.

jet arms escalation

Mr Winston S. Churchill, MP for Epsom (Conservative) said in a speech to the House of Commons that the arms race was a "race to the bottom" and that the only way to stop it was by a "race to the top".

Mr Churchill said that the arms race was a "race to the bottom" because it was a race to see who could produce the most powerful weapons at the lowest cost. He said that this was a race to the bottom because it was a race to see who could produce the most powerful weapons at the lowest cost.

Mr Churchill said that the only way to stop the arms race was by a "race to the top". He said that this was a race to the top because it was a race to see who could produce the most powerful weapons at the highest cost.

for General Haig, Lord Chalfont and "other hard liners whose warnings the Soviet build up 'far from slowing the arms race would fuel it, the rival doomwatchers literally echo and spur each other on, as if by collusion, towards collision'".

It is unwarranted to lay the blame for the Soviet build up on those who warn against it as it would have been to blame Churchill for Hitler's military build up in the 1930s which led to the outbreak of war.

Yours faithfully,
WINSTON S. CHURCHILL,
House of Commons.

police state in Uruguay as well as its false allegations on human rights.

The first hand information I have gathered as a result of contacts made with government leaders and high ranking officers of the armed forces as well as those established with representatives of other sectors, show that Uruguay is a country in full evolution, on its way to a future of great prosperity.

This is due to the fact that Uruguay faced in a realistic and brave way the two great enemies of the Western world: terrorism, supported by international communism, and the economic crisis resulting from inflation. During all the meetings I had, and particularly in my talks with the President and the Commanders in Chief, we analysed the problems that Uruguay had to face and which in many respects threaten the USA.

Our two countries are united by cultural and political links as well as by those common interests which represent the basis for Western civilization. Those values are under constant attack by communist forces seeking the destruction of democ- racy. I feel my talks were useful because I was able to acquire a broad knowledge of the situation in Uruguay. I have seen a country engaged in a process of transfor- mation firmly set to preserve the values of Western civilization.

I would like to add that Rep Mr Lawrence McDonald visited Uruguay in late December.

Yours sincerely,
RAMIRO PIRIZ,
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.,
Embassy of Uruguay,
48 Lennox Gardens, SW1.

Situation in Uruguay

From the Uruguayan Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Sir, Bearing in mind the principle according to which The Times ensures the publication of reports and comments reflecting different opinions on a given subject, may I take the liberty of requesting you to publish an opinion quite in contrast with the your correspondent (Mr A. Tarnowski and the United States Senator Frank Church.

I am referring to the views on my country as expressed by Mr Lawrence McDonald, United States Democratic Representative for Georgia, the summary of which have the pleasure of hereby quoting.

When I return to the USA I shall present the Congress with several reports illustrating the falsehood of the communist cam- paign concerning the existence of a

The fees barrier to university

From the Vice-Chancellor of York University

Sir, The University of York, like every other university, is currently thinking about its budget for 1977-78. As we do so, the full implications of the massive increases in fees announced by the Minister of Education late last year have struck home.

The new levels (£500 for home and £650 for overseas under- graduates; £750 for home and £900 for overseas postgraduates) represent leaps of from 56 per cent to 312 per cent above the current fees. The steepest increase is for home undergraduates; but the great majority of these will now have their fees paid by their local authorities. Those who will suffer most are self-financed students from home or abroad, of whom there are many who embarked on their studies one or two years ago, at much lower fee levels; in justice, they should not be penalized in mid-course and it is essential that the "hardship fund" should fill this gap.

The majority of our students, whose own wages are secure, are concerned for those others from home or overseas who are qual- ified for higher study, but will be prevented from doing so by the burden of extra fees; and many members of staff, while recognizing the facts that the fall in the value of the pound will lessen the impact of the increase in some cases, and that some students from the richer countries can well afford these fees, share the concern that the new fees will effect- ively lessen the number of students from poorer countries and of home students who are trying to pay their own way.

This is a far cry indeed from the Robbins principle which pre- vailed only a dozen years ago, when this university was founded, and being the principle that higher education should be available to all who showed the ability, and the desire to apply themselves to it.

I believe that I speak for the majority of my colleagues, and for our students in deploring the merchandising of higher education in urging the Government to think again to abolish the differential for overseas students, and to lower the fees so that they do not present an almost impos- sible barrier for the less fortunate.

Yours sincerely,
G. M. CARSTAIRS,
Vice-Chancellor,
University of York,
Bevington,
York.
February 11.

Curbing the bombers

From Mr Stanley Shorrocks

Sir, With reference to a letter on February 8 by Lieutenant-Colonel J. C. Styles, "Curbing the bombers", and the report by your parlia- mentary correspondent of Lord Brookeborough's reply to Lord Brookeborough's Second Reading on February 9, I report this disturbing experience:

My company required explosives and detonators to create a number of controlled explosions. We filled in the necessary forms and duly acquired the materials.

On usage we recorded with sig- nature the movement of the detona- tors and explosives from our store to proving ground. We recorded by time/date/signature when the ex- plosions occurred.

Thinking this would be regular practice, we mildly rebuked the issuing authority for not instructing us to do this and were informed that there was no laid down obligation for us to have to do so.

Surely, in these troubled times, when the key component of a ter- rorist bomb is the detonator, much more care should be taken and losses discovered and reported more exactly.

Lord Harris's reply to Lord Brookeborough gives me encourage- ment to think that this is being done.

Yours faithfully,
STANLEY SHORROCKS,
The Braids,
Billinge End Road,
Blackburn,
Lancashire.

Rockall

From Lord Campbell of Croft

Sir, Mr Pritzie, who told us (Feb- ruary 11) that he hailed from Tipperary, will find that it is a long long way from Rockall (farwest- ern island in the Atlantic) to his home in Tipperary.

In declaring that the coast of the Irish Republic is nearer to Rockall than that of Great Britain, he ignored St. Kilda, a Scottish island which is also nearer to Rockall than Ulster; and the large populated islands of Lewis and Harris.

International controversy con- tinues over the degree of sov- ereignty that can be exercised over uninhabited islands, at the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference and elsewhere. What must be made clear, in the context of this cor- respondence about findings on Rockall, is that the Bill which became the Island of Rockall Act, 1972, was intended to remove any remaining doubts concerning the island's status as part of Scotland. That Bill, which was introduced by me as Secretary of State at the time, was based upon accepted principles. It was not an instrument for terri- torial aggrandisement or for avar-icious designs upon suspected oil wealth below the sea.

Until recently Rockall was for the birds. Today it has a role in the delineation of national and EEC zones. For the vast extension of fishery limits, together with the need to find and conserve stocks of fish in that area, and the possible presence of oil and gas in the con- tinental shelf are new factors. They require orderly regulation of ac- tivities in the surrounding sea by recognized authorities.

Yours faithfully,
CAMPBELL OF CROFT,
House of Lords,
February 14.

The railways: high fares and services

From Mr H. C. Le Neve Foster

Sir, I read with some interest the letter (February 10) from Sir Henry Johnson, I write with a plea for commuters as Sir Henry has pointed out fares have increased by 70-80 per cent in about two years, and I believe we are to be faced with a further substantial increase later this year. I accept the fact that operating costs have increased sub- stantially and that commuter travel is probably the least profitable part of railway operations due to the under-utilization of stock in off peak periods. I do not, however, even if Sir Henry's suggestions were put into effect whether sufficient profit could be generated in other spheres of the railway's activities to offset the loss involved in commuter services without some fare increases.

A great many commuters have now been locked into a position which few could have reasonably contemplated even two years ago when many of them bought houses in the outer suburbs and the home counties. These people are being driven in increasing numbers to seek other means of travel to and from their work places. Many now use cars, and a considerable pro- portion of them have been prob- ably easier in direct costs than the use of public transport. As fares increase, this situation will get worse leading to greater congestion on roads leading into and out of cities.

I suggest that the time has come when, as I believe happens in Sweden, the cost of travel between residence and business should be an allowable deduction from income for income tax purposes. Such an allowance could be based on regular essential travel by public transport within certain limits. The result would be, among other things, less traffic on roads thereby a saving in fuel and a better public transport service in which a fare could be charged not only to reflect the true cost of the service but to enable that service to be improved.

It may be argued that the Inland Revenue that such a scheme is un- workable. True, it is a departure from accepted ideas in this country, but I feel sure that with all the ingenuity of which the Inland Revenue is capable, such a scheme is not beyond it to administer.

Perhaps I shall be accused of suggesting that the Government should use money provided by the general taxpayer. Is it any more a subsidy than the 'writing off' of losses in nationalized industries or the GLC subsidizing London Trans- port?

Yours faithfully,
H. C. LE NEVE FOSTER,
15 Hail Street, W1,
February 11.

From the chairman of the National Freight Corporation

Sir, I am sorry that my old friend Sir Henry Johnson, in the course of championing railway services in today's issue of The Times (Feb- ruary 10), should have recommended the return of Freightliners Ltd to the control of British Railways. As he will know, British Railways is a company of the company and has an equal number of directors on the board but management is in the hands of the National Freight Corporation, under whose aegis the business has flourished.

It has taken us several years to build up a proper marketing or- ganization, to begin to tailor the services to the real demands of the market. The secret of success for a road/rail container business in a small island like Britain is to develop the correct size and type of "catchment area" for the freight,

Daguerre's Diorama

From Mr Peter Chamberlin

Sir, With reference to Mr David Robinson's fascinating article about the history of Daguerre's Diorama, which appeared in The Times Saturday Review dated February 5, I was struck by his observations that "mainly due to its continuous occupation, the archaeological signifi- cance of the building has even- tually been lost to sight".

If it had been, it seems very unlikely that authority for its demolition would have been so easily obtained. As it is, it seems improbable that any intervention can now save it for preservation either as a unique monument, or as a Diorama (a serious proposal for the refurbishing and recreation of the exhibition has been con- sidered).

The development of photography, cinematography, television and now biology has been so rapid and so widespread in its influence that it would be most felicitous to es- tablish a museum devoted to Daguerre's early experiments in creating the illusion of reality in his pictures of places—aided by light, shade and colour—while he was con- currently searching for the right mixture of optics and chemistry to make and fix photographic images. To create such a museum in the actual building which housed Daguerre's work during the three decades during which it was exposed to, and appreciated by, Londoners of the nineteenth century could not be more appropriate (especially as nothing remains of

Jerusalem eviction

From Mr David Krivine

Sir, Dean Hamford, of the Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, concedes (January 28) that of the three Arab families evicted from the Jewish quarter of the Old City under the slum clearance scheme, one was indeed offered "free alternative ac- commodation". That was the family of Abdul Haq. Omar Arabi was initially offered "half the cost of accommodation" and only "10 days after the eviction was the offer changed to a flat free of charge".

The explanation is simple. A key- money flat was found for him inside the Old City. Key-money is half the cost of purchase. He refused, so was given the choice of taking a flat in full ownership outside the walls of the Old City.

The third family, that of the widow, has (it is said) "received no offer of compensation". Being particularly sensitive to Arab political pressures, she chooses to make herself scarce. But she is entitled to compensation under the law. When the dust settles, contract will no doubt be made. There are pre-

cedents. Omar Arabi's previous residence was one room and no more (for 12 persons). The inner wall is completely damp; I felt it with my hand.

As to the allegation that the Jewish quarter is larger than it was in 1948, well, there were no fixed boundaries then. Today it is exactly 29 acres in size, less than 15 per cent of the Old City. Jews are now found in the Moslem, Christian or Armenian quarters, which between them are five times as large.

Though the intention is to keep new construction in the Jewish quarter for Jews, there is no law banning others from the area. As it happens, an Arab is currently suing in an Israeli court for the right to buy a Jewish-built flat in the quarter. He has a good Jewish advocate and a good case in law, too.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID KRIVINE,
Economic Correspondent,
The Jerusalem Post,
27a Hehalutz Street,
Jerusalem,
January 31.

Towards a Cyprus settlement

From Mr Francis Noel-Baker

Sir, Friends of Cyprus will rejoice at the news that the President of the Republic, Archbishop Makarios, and the leader of the Turkish minority, Vice-President Denktaş, have at last met in Nicosia.

As a participant in the original Makarios-Harding negotiations 20 years ago, and a frequent visitor to Cyprus since, may I be allowed a brief comment?

The elements of a practicable (though by no means ideal) settle- ment are now clear: a geographical reduction of the Turkish occupied area, and a bizonal federation with free movement between the zones.

Despite the loss of its richest territories, Greek Cyprus has flourished since the invasion. The "economic miracle" in the Republic is striking; as, alas, is the stagnation and collapse through- out the Turkish occupied zone. The Turkish Cypriots (as opposed to the immigrants imported from Turkey in order to alter the population balance) deplore the partition and occupation of their island no less bitterly than their Greek com- patriots.

But the task of reunifying and de-militarizing the Republic must be approached with caution lest, once again, as in 1960, an unfair and unworkable system of govern- ment be imposed on Cyprus by outside powers, who ignore the facts of life on the island, and particularly the fundamental fact that the Turkish Cypriots are a minority of only 13 per cent (1974). They are entitled, of course, to proper protection, but must not have the right to block the wishes of the Greek majority and thus paralyse the effective government of the Republic.

In some ways, the physical separation of the Turkish community will make coexistence easier. But it will also mean that de facto partition continues, mitigated only (one hopes) by open frontiers between the two virtually autonomous regions. The new central Govern- ment will have rather few, and at first rather shadowy, reserved powers.

One must hope that, with time, so fragile and artificial a federal structure will help to restore the happy relations between the two communities which was so notable a feature of Cyprus before outside forces set the country against itself. Then further progress towards real reunification might be possible.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
FRANCIS NOEL-BAKER,
Travellers' Club,
February 14.

Biblical archaeology

From the Dean of Durham

Sir, After watching the fourth pro- gramme of the BBC's expensive and much-publicized series *BC: The Archaeology of the Bible Lands*, I should be grateful for the opportunity of assuring your readers that the century of biblical scholarship has made a much more constructive contribution to our understanding of the Old Testament than Mr Magnus Magnusson's presentation has so far suggested.

The chosen method of retelling an entire biblical story (the story of the "Bible story" and then alternately decorating and casting doubt upon it by means of film shot on (the supposed) loca- tion, with close-ups of miscellaneous excavated artifacts and stained-glass windows, is altogether too unsatisfactory to satisfy the scholars associated with the series. It is hardly surprising that the frag- mentary comments they are per- mitted appear so intrusive and negative.

There is value in reading the Authorized Version without the aid of biblical criticism and archaeology; there is greater value, I believe, in drawing on all the resources of biblical scholarship; but there is little to be gained from the kind of television journalism which lumps indiscriminately between the two. Yours faithfully,
E. W. BRATTON,
The Deanery,
Durham.

The Jubilee Hymn

From the Bishop of Wakefield

Sir, The hymn for the Diamond Jubilee (Colonel Alan H. Maude's letter: February 11) was written by William Walsham How, the first Bishop of Wakefield, still remem- bered as the author of "For all the Saints". On Easter Eve 1897 Walsham How received a letter from the Prince of Wales (dated April 16) inviting him to write the Jubilee hymn to be sung on June 20. The Bishop worked with consid- erable industry over the busy Easter weekend, and sent his four-verse hymn to Sandringham. The postal services were no less energetic as How received a grateful acknow- ledgement from the Prince of Wales, sent on April 21. Nine days later Sir Arthur Sullivan sent Walsham How the music.

Colonel Maude's recollection of the words is remarkably accurate, though he has transposed the last two lines of the third verse to the first. The hymn begins:

O King of Kings, whose reign of old
Hath been from everlasting;
Before whose throne, their crowns
Of gold
The white-robed saints are casting;
While all the shining courts on high
With angel songs are ringing,
O let thy children venture nigh.
Their lowly homage bringing.

The hymn was well received, but not universally popular. Acknow- ledging the congratulations of a friend Walsham How wrote: "Such nice letters as yours would make me very vain, I fear, if I had not had others telling me that my hymn was the veriest rubbish, not up to a fourth form boy. Then I have showers of abuse from Scotland for writing 'England's flag' instead of 'Britain's'. So you see good folk help to save me from vanity...."

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. Sir John can take heart. Yours faithfully,
COLIN WAKEFIELD,
Bishop's Lodge,
Woodhouse Lane,
Wakefield.

THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

For Saving Investing and House-Purchase

HALIFAX

BUILDING SOCIETY

Land standstill

Sens with

models halted

20,000 idle

men are idle at Longbridge (Birmingham), where Mini car production is stopped. At Solihull the Rover 3500 range is out of production and 1,085 men have been sent home. At Cowley (Oxford) both the Maxi and Princess lines are at a standstill because of shortages of pressings normally made at Castle Bromwich.

The trouble at Cowley, where 3,500 workers are idle, and more are facing the prospect of lay-offs, is aggravated by a further internal dispute which has stopped Marina car production. This strike involved 150 maintenance engineers who are also objecting to proposed changes in working arrangements.

Within the Cowley complex 650 more workers are laid off from the central spares department because of a stoppage by 60 men.

Leysland's third big trouble centre is the Triumph plant at Canley (Coventry) where the 350 strikers from the paint shop voted yesterday to continue their two-week-old stoppage which has halted output of Dolomite, Stag, Spitfire and Triumph 2000 cars.

The strikers are objecting to the management's use of industrial engineers on work study exercises in their department—a move that is also linked to a reorganization plan. The shut-down at Coventry has meant the lay-off of another 400 men at the Dolomite body plant at Liverpool and a further 220 at the Spitfire body plant at Bordesley Green, Birmingham.

Triumph (Coventry) has a huge stockpile of completed vehicles which built up during a two-week stoppage by delivery drivers which immediately preceded the paint shop strike. Although the drivers are back at work, they have refused to cross picket lines set up by the Triumph strikers.

But output hit: Five hundred workers at the company's body and truck division at Leysland were laid off yesterday because of a week-long strike by 17 crane drivers.

The drivers, who move heavy vehicle frames in the final assembly factory want upgrading in the company's pay structure. More lay-offs resulting from the dispute are expected later this week.

Bakers give notice of

1p increase

on a loaf

A new round of price increase applications made by bakers, partly to cover the cost of discounting, has been submitted to the Price Commission.

The three big bakers, RHM, Spillers and Associated British Foods, said yesterday that they were waiting only for the 28-day statutory notification period to elapse in early March before putting up prices.

The increases applied for would take the maximum price of a standard loaf of bread up by 1p to 22p in most areas. Yet further increases of 1p could result shortly if the Government follows its declared intention of removing the present subsidy of about 1p a loaf this spring.

This will be the second rise in bread prices since early January. The bakers point out, however, that the earlier increase was delayed for over a month by the intervention by Mr Hattersley, the Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection.

Behind the latest spate of applications lies a tightening of controls on the discounts which bakers can offer retailers. It was the greater freedom to discount introduced by Mr Hattersley with effect from January which led to the six-week dispute by bread delivery men.

Other factors are an increase in raw material costs, notably flour and fuel.

According to a list issued yesterday, the Price Commission rejected only five price increase notifications submitted to it during January.

Airfix Plastics, which put in two of the rejected notifications, says that refusal was on the grounds that it had put in incomplete information. The company had been seeking an increase of 17.10 per cent on the price of plastic housewares and 9.55 per cent on toy products.

The other companies whose applications were rejected were Sealed Air, which asked for a 21.20 per cent rise on the price of its textile sizes and defoaming agents, Burgess Industrial Silencing, maker of acoustical products, and Decol Foam Plastics, maker of domestic and industrial sponges.

All five of the applications rejected outright by the Price Commission have been submitted by smaller concerns within the commission's Category 11 classification. For these manufacturers the means they have a turnover of not more than £10m a year.

Guinness wins White Child battle

By Ray Maughan

One of the longest and most acrimonious takeover battles formally ended yesterday when Arthur Guinness, the brewer, announced that it had won control of 52.22 per cent of the capital of White Child & Benney, the plastics and containers group.

Nevertheless, the defenders promise a vigorous and prolonged campaign. From his hospital bed in West London, where he is suffering from an ulcer, Mr. Richard Benney, WCB's chairman, pledged that "Guinness will never get full control at the existing cash offer price of 65p".

He personally holds around 4 per cent of the WCB equity, and claims that he can get power of attorney for a further 10 per cent. His defences are based on three precepts: that "they" have obtained less than a tenth of the free shares; the offer is "ludicrously low"; and he strongly objects to the fact that "the Guinness company in the trade has been taken over by the number two".

His views have been consistent since the brewer's subsidiary, Guinness Plastics Group, first bid for WCB in 1974. That attempt failed through

Guinness was left nursing 43 per cent of WCB's capital. Then, late last year, the National Enterprise Board offered a £1.1m cash injection in return for an equity holding in WCB which would have diluted Guinness's interest to 35 per cent.

That prospect prompted Guinness to re-launch its bid for WCB. Apart from the shares it bought in 1974, Guinness's offer on this occasion was taken up by shareholders holding no more than 5.74 per cent of the WCB equity. The only institutional holder of WCB shares, Eagle Star,

Blanket mill

waits to

restart with

clean sheet

Uncertainty continues over the future of the Moderna blanket factory at Myrholmsryd, West Yorkshire, where some 332 employees are facing redundancy after a recent takeover.

Mr David Rowe, appointed managing director of the plant by the new owners, Soma Consultants, has given the Department of Industry an undertaking that by the end of this month he will present firm proposals for the future of the plant.

It seems that the company's plans envisage a reduced workforce of 100 to 150 people. The plan is to make every employee redundant now and start recruiting with a clean sheet later.

Up to 1974 Moderna (Winey) had a distinguished and profitable history for 60 years. Then it switched to acrylic raw materials for its blankets and slacks into loss.

In late 1974 Bond Worth Holdings, in which Courtauld had a 30 per cent stake, came to the rescue with an unexpected agreed bid. By January 1975, Moderna was in the hands of Bond Worth despite a short-lived counter bid from a party called Mountain Securities.

A deal with Manta SA of Belgium, Europe's largest blanket producers, to buy 100 per cent Moderna and give Bond Worth a minority holding in Manta fell through. Last November the company was bought by Soma Consultants. In December the closure and redundancies were announced.

Mr Rowe explains: "The present mill is operating equipment which is in many cases inadequate, inefficient and in some cases dangerous."

"It is in buildings which are certainly not up to requirements of modern industrial working because they are so old. There is on the site a building (used for warehousing and packing) which lends itself to a single floor operation and gives us adequate space to put in a manufacturing unit we have in mind."

"We will be using that equipment which still has a significant working life when it is reconditioned and fitted with the spares and attachments to improve productivity."

On redundancies and re-employment, Mr Rowe said: "Everybody is going to be treated the same. There is to be no preference and no promises made to any particular individual. Jobs as and when they arise, will be advertised and everybody in the area will be free to apply. There was to be a break in the manufacturing process. He said: "You can't carry on manufacturing when you have to move equipment, recondition it, and install what is new at the same time."

"Government departments do not yet have our final proposals. There are commercial reasons for not revealing everything at present. But the end product is known—blankets and quilts."

Ronald Kershaw

Worst day

for shares

in 3 months

By David Mori

Ordinary shares had their worst day for more than three months on the stock market in London yesterday as pay policy and sterling worries were compounded by a gloomy set of trade figures. Gilt also suffered with losses of up to £2.

The FT index was 152.2 lower at 366.3 by the close of trading and, according to Data-Stream, £1,731m was wiped off the market's capitalization. Of this almost £500m can be attributed to the hefty mark-down of prices which followed the poor trade figures.

In the gilt-edged market long dates were the worst hit and early selling lowered most stocks by up to 1½ points. They

Top Swan Hunter man

may join state team

By Peter Hill

Industrial Correspondent

Mr Tom McIver, managing director of Swan Hunter Shipbuilders, is expected to be appointed shortly as a part-time member of the organizing committee for British Shipbuilders, the Government's planned new state shipbuilding organization.

Swan Hunter is the largest single shipbuilder on the Government's nationalization list, employing about 22,000 workers throughout the group. It has been less than enthusiastic about the Government's plans for nationalization and, in particular, the formula devised for compensation.

The expected appointment of Mr McIver is seen as a further move by the Government to strengthen the organizing committee team which has suffered disruption with the departure of Mr J. Graham Day, chief executive designate of the proposed state body, and more recently, the resignation of three key members of the committee's staff.



Mr Tom McIver.

the state already owns, wholly or partly. These include Sunderland Shipbuilders, Cammell Laird and Govan Shipbuilders.

Swan Hunter is at present involved in negotiations on a joint basis with Sunderland Shipbuilders which could lead to orders worth £200m for 19 cargo ships being placed by Nigeria from both companies and led by Mr Casey returned last week from talks with Nigerian officials in Lagos.

Knitting machine

workers

occupy factory

Seven hundred workers at a Leicester knitting-machine manufacturers took over the premises yesterday and started a sit-in.

The workers at the Wildt Mellor Bromley works in Aylestone Road were protesting over a decision by the company to close the factory making nearly 400 redundant.

For some weeks talks have been going on between the management and the four unions involved, but they broke down last week when it was being transferred to the company's other factory in Surrey.

As work started yesterday the doors and gates were locked and barricaded and the work in progress was being supported by a sit-in.

Mr Alf Wilson, chairman of the shop stewards, said: "We have got to put up some fight. We are prepared to dig our heels in and occupy the factory for weeks if we need be."

Chancellor confident trade

unions will accept new deal

From David Cross

Brussels, Feb 14

Mr Healey today voiced his confidence that the Government would reach a new pay agreement with the trade unions in due course.

"I have no doubt," the Chancellor told reporters, "that we will make progress and reach an agreement."

After last week's "negative" contributions from trade union leaders on the next round of the pay policy, there had been a "barrage of very constructive speeches" from other trade unionists during the weekend.

Mr Healey said it was clear that a satisfactory agreement on pay was a condition of the Government being able to cut taxes in the spring. But he refused to spell out whether Phase Three of the pay policy would precede or follow the Budget.

The Chancellor was speaking to reporters after a brief session of finance ministers of the Nine, which he chaired for the first time as acting president of the EEC's Council of Ministers.

Most of the two-and-a-half-hour meeting was devoted to the drafting of a work programme for finance ministers during the next four and a half months, when the British will be in the chair.

Mr Healey said that forthcoming discussions in Brussels with his colleagues from the Nine would be designed essentially to make a distinctive European input to the intensive round of international discussions which would be taking place.

These included the EEC summit meeting in Rome in March, meetings of the International Monetary Fund in Washington in late April, the Western economic summit set for May in London, and a new round of so-called tripartite employment discussions between EEC member states, trade unions and ministers in June.

The aim of the Europeans would be to remedy a "very much gloomier" international economic climate than a few months ago.

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Fed stresses fiscal policy

as way to US recovery

From Frank Vogl

Washington, Feb 14

The United States Federal Reserve Board is determined to gradually reduce the growth of money and credit levels and repeatedly stress that efforts to stimulate the economy must concentrate on fiscal policy.

The Board is also deeply concerned that there should be greater official institutional efforts to ensure the adequacy of international financial resources.

These points are made forcefully by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in its annual report published today. They are points that fully reflect the Fed system's views and they signal both the Fed's desire to hold its present moderate money supply expansion course and its support for the strengthening of such institutions as the International Monetary Fund.

The Carter Administration has indicated that it hopes the Fed will act in such a manner as to prevent significant interest rate increases as economic recovery here moves forward.

This would probably force the Fed to ease its money policies somewhat, but today's report notes that "one essential cornerstone of a credible anti-inflationary strategy is a commitment to bring down gradually the growth of money and credit levels compatible with long-run price stability."

The Fed goes on to point out that this objective means that there are definite limits to the extent that money policy can be used as a short-run economic stimulant and thus the search for additional economic incentives now "must focus more directly on fiscal policy."

It is most clear that the Fed is still deeply concerned about the substantial reduction in the rate made in the past year. It admits that the great amount of slack still evident in the economy should permit some further cut in the inflation rate by 1977, but adds that at the end of 1976 no one "could be assured this would in fact take place."

Moreover, the Fed states that it is worried about the sluggish pace of capital investment, and the fact that the continuation of this sluggishness could lead to new capacity shortages in critical areas well before an acceptable unemployment rate has again been achieved. The Fed calls for greater concern by the authorities for the provision of adequate incentives to ensure increased capital investment.

Communist bank posts list

From John Earle

Two Milan stockbrokers, Ettore Funagalli and Isidoro Albertini, are among 11 names submitted to the Government by the Communist Party as technically competent non-ideological candidates for senior banking posts.

Chairmanships and other top appointments are up for renewal in more than 50 banks and savings banks, including the Rome Savings Bank, the Turin Savings Bank and Banco di Sicilia, where the terms of the chairman and board expired seven years ago.

The Communist Party is waging a campaign against the practice which the Christian Democrats have imposed on their coalition allies in past years of sharing out senior banking posts among political appointees. In an unexpected move at the weekend, the Communists submitted to Signor Gaetano Starnelli, the Treasury Minister, a list of 11 non-Communist candidates.

Besides the stockbrokers, the list included Erosio Starnelli, deputy chairman of the state corporation, IRI; Antonino Occhipinti, till recently with the Bank of Italy; and Vincenzo Milazzo, the state Accountant-General.



Extract from Accounts at 31st December, 1976.

	1976	1975
£000	£000	£000
Issued Capital	10,800	10,800
Retained Profits	2,462	1,506
Subordinated Loans	5,872	4,941
Deposits	352,480	273,825
Loans	216,665	169,599
Total Assets	379,319	296,810
Profits before Taxation	2,988	1,825
after Taxation	1,388	849

Japan International Bank Limited

Shareholders

Fuji Bank Daiwa Securities

Mitsubishi Bank Nikko Securities

Sumitomo Bank Yamaichi Securities

Tokai Bank

7/8 King Street, London EC2V 8DX

all in

retail sales

The following are the seasonally adjusted figures for the volume of retail sales and value of new instalment credit released by the Department of Industry:

	Sales by volume 1971=100	New credit extended £m
1972	105.8	2,497
1973	110.7	2,871
1974	109.9	2,517
1975		
1976		
1975 Q1	111.1	715
Q2	108.2	759
Q3	105.4	748
Q4	106.7	769
1976 Q1	107.3	844
Q2	107.6	875
Q3	108.9	915
Q4	108.5	972
1975	106.8	265
1976		
Jan	110.2	282
Feb	106.8	276
March	105.4	280
April	106.8	281
May	106.8	292
June	107.3	292
July	108.8	291
August	108.8	305
Sept	108.8	319
Oct	108.1	310
Nov	108.2	332
Dec	108.3	330
1977	108	—
Jan p	108	—
p provisional		

The Times index: 154.87-5.17
The FT index: 366.3-15.2

THE POUND

	Bank buys	Bank sells
Australia \$	1.52	1.57
Austria Sch	30.50	28.50
Belgium F	65.00	62.00
Canada \$	1.80	1.75
Denmark Kr	4.26	4.08
Finland Mk	6.75	6.50
France Fr	8.75	8.41
Germany DM	4.26	4.08
Greece Dr	68.50	65.00
Hongkong \$	8.30	7.85
Italy L	1580.00	1520.00
Japan Yn	510.00	485.00
Netherlands Gld	4.46	4.24
Norway Kr	9.31	8.95
Portugal Esc	58.50	54.50
Spain Ptas	121.50	113.00
Sweden Kr	7.52	7.15
Switzerland Fr	4.46	4.24
US \$	1.75	1.70
Yugoslavia Dnr	34.75	32.25

Commodities: Renter's index was

at 1621.7 (previous 1622.1). Equities fell heavily. Gilt-edged Securities had loss of up to £2.

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er pages

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Saudis ban 'inflated bid' companies

Jeddah, Feb. 14.—Several foreign companies have been blacklisted by Saudi Arabia for submitting inflated bids on government tenders, the English-language *Arab News* reported yesterday.

The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs has cancelled all bids submitted for sewage and flood control projects in eastern Saudi Arabia because the bids of a number of qualified international companies were in some cases triple the ministry's own estimate.

The blacklisted companies, which were not identified, will be banned from bidding on future government contracts. It is alleged that a Swedish and a Japanese company were among them. The government has set up a committee to investigate the relationship between foreign contractors and local agents.

Motor trade turnover 21pc up in 1976

Total turnover of Britain's motor traders last year was 21 per cent higher than the previous year, according to latest figures from the Department of Industry.

The sales value of new vehicles in 1976 was up 30 per cent on 1975 and 24 per cent in the case of used vehicles. Other sales and receipts, which include petrol, oil, tyres, spares and accessories and receipts from servicing and repairs, were up 15 per cent in value.

Appeal by builders

The construction industry is in "the most severe and prolonged recession" the National Federation of Building Trades Employers said yesterday. Much of this is due to the December mini-Budget and cuts in public-sector building programmes and the employers urged Mr Healey to reverse "the concentration of cuts on capital programmes."

German strike figures

The number of days lost by strikes action in West Germany jumped last year to 533,700, from only 68,700 the year before. The sharp rise was mainly due to a national strike in the printing industry. Around 169,000 workers struck during the year for four days each on average, against 35,800 workers and an average of two days only in 1975.

Brokers query Drax

There is no economic justification for the advanced ordering of the second stage of the Drax coal-fired power station in Yorkshire at a cost of £500m, according to a report from W. Greenwell & Co, the London brokers. In terms of employment, however, it might be politically desirable, says the report.

Mr Dell assures industrialists of 'open mind' on Bullock proposals

By Malcolm Brown
Mr Dell, Secretary of State for Trade, went out of his way yesterday to emphasize that the Government was keeping an open mind on the best way to introduce industrial democracy.

Speaking at an Industrial Society conference in London, Mr Dell repeatedly stressed the need for the agreement of all parties before any system was brought in.

This will provide some reassurance to the Confederation of British Industry leaders who are to see Mr Callaghan, the Prime Minister, today. The CBI representatives will tell Mr Callaghan that they have three sticking points from which they will not be budged.

They are totally opposed to the imposition by law of union-nominated directors on to company boards; they oppose parity of representation for union-nominated and shareholder-elected directors; and they will not agree to unions having a monopoly in the choice of worker-directors.

It has already been conveyed to the Government that these sticking points were phrased with precision by the CBI, which leaves ministers with the prob-

lem of finding out exactly what kind of compromise might be acceptable.

Mr Dell, in an attempt to signal to the CBI that the Government did not intend to be dogmatic in its discussions with employers, said yesterday that he placed great emphasis on the need for a lasting settlement.

"There has been too much legislative yo-yo in recent years and I do not want legislation on industrial democracy to be introduced in the kind of atmosphere of dissension and bitterness which, for example, has surrounded previous legislative proposals on industrial relations questions."

Mr Dell said the CBI had pressed for the maximum degree of flexibility. It was a tradition of company law in this country that it should allow considerable freedom to companies to devise whatever organizational structure best suited their needs.

"The Government believes that employees must be given a statutory right to representation on the boards of the larger companies and some extent the statute must prescribe how this is to be done,

but we shall aim to establish a framework which permits and encourages the parties within each company to reach agreement on solutions best suited to its particular circumstances."

Turning to the mechanics of appointing worker-directors, Mr Dell showed considerable sympathy to the notion that unions should have a central role, but he emphasized that the whole issue was one of "great and legitimate concern". It needed discussion and thought.

"Above all," he said, "we must ensure that the system we adopt has the confidence of all those closely involved, if for no other reason than that, otherwise there would be a clear danger of the trigger mechanism never functioning."

One of the central issues, Mr Dell said, was the extent to which employee representatives could or should have equal representation on boards with shareholders.

"It seems to be important in whatever comes out of the consultations on this point that employees should have an effective and satisfying role in the decision making and future development of the enterprises in which they work."

Logica moves in Europe and US

Logica, the London software consultancy, has opened an office in New York from which to market its banking and communications-based services to American clients.

Together with its French associate SESA, Logica has also been successful in a major European project—leading a six-company consortium which will implement Euronet, a data telecommunications network for the EEC. A proposal based on the British Steel network was rejected for this.

The American initiative illustrates an alternative approach to the idea of collaborative United Kingdom software marketing now being promoted by the National Enterprise Board through its Inspec Data Systems subsidiary. Logica has not formally rejected the board's advances, but remains unenthusiastic at present.

These European contract, believed to be worth nearly 13m French francs (about £1.5m), follows negotiations with the telecommunications administrations of the nine EEC countries, including the British Post Office.

Three multinational consortia submitted proposals for Euronet. One, which included Plessey, was rejected and the final choice was led by SESA/Logica and Datal/Leasco respectively.

The proposed Datal/Leasco-

Computer news

openhagen, Dublin and Luxembourg

New consultancy

A new London-based computer consultancy has been set up by Dr David Butler and Mr George Cox, formerly with the Diebold organization. The broad aim will be to offer consultancy in the converging areas of data processing, telecommunications and office automation for both manufacturers and users.

Mr Butler, formerly director of the Diebold European research programme, will be chairman of Butler Cox & Partners. Mr Cox, formerly United Kingdom managing director for Diebold, is managing director of the new company.

Word system

Among recent developments in the fast-moving field of word processing, Wordplex has announced a single-station unit to complement its shared-logic multiple-station systems. It consists of an "intelligent" display screen, dual flexible-disc memory and high-speed character printer. Purchase price is £8,500.

Communications software includes the ability to transfer files from magnetic card (as used on some typewriter-based systems) to Wordplex flexible disc.

Kenneth Owen

DoI relief interest rate down ½pc

The maximum rate of interest relief grant and interest rates for loans under section 7 of the Industry Act 1972 were reduced yesterday.

The Department of Industry said that the rate of interest relief grant available in those cases where it would be appropriate to allow the equivalent of an interest-free period on a Department of Industry loan—but where companies obtained their finance from other sources—was being reduced from 15.5 per cent to 15 per cent for each interest-free year.

The "concessional" rate of interest on loans for employment-creating projects was reduced from 12.5 per cent to 12 per cent, while the broadly commercial rate of interest on loans for modernization projects not providing additional employment was reduced from 15.5 per cent to 15 per cent.

TERMS OF TRADE

The following are the unit value index numbers for visible trade not seasonally adjusted issued by the Department of Trade yesterday:

	1970=100	Exports	Imports	Trade
1972	111.0	109.6	101.3	
1973	126.0	139.7	90.2	
1974	182.7	218.0	74.6	
1975	198.5	245.7	68.8	
1976 p	240.5	301.3	79.9	
1976 Q1	219.0	270.0	61.7	
Q2	234.2	293.6	73.9	
Q3	247.4	309.3	85.0	
Q4	261.7	332.1	87.8	
1976	228.4	285.2	80.0	
April	235.3	284.2	75.5	
May	240.4	291.1	73.2	
June	242.6	306.1	73.3	
July	247.9	303.0	80.3	
Aug	251.7	313.8	80.2	
Sept	255.4	324.0	79.2	
Oct	251.8	324.8	79.2	
Nov	256.9	337.5	79.1	
Dec	272.7	337.2	80.9	

Export unit value index as a percentage of the Import Unit Value Index

Provisional

UK TRADE

The following are the January trade figures, seasonally adjusted and corrected on a balance of payments basis with allowance for known recording errors, as released by the Department of Trade:

	Exports	Imports	Balance
1974	15,899	21,119	-5,220
1975	18,780	21,949	-3,168
1976	24,424	28,055	-3,631
1976 Q1	5,414	5,988	-574
Q2	5,995	6,932	-937
Q3	6,183	7,326	-1,143
Q4	6,832	7,819	-987
1976	1,932	2,224	-292
April	2,018	2,359	-341
May	2,070	2,395	-325
June	1,969	2,474	-505
July	2,078	2,354	-276
August	2,144	2,512	-368
Sept	2,228	2,553	-325
Oct	2,243	2,690	-447
Nov	2,361	2,576	-215
Dec	2,396	2,941	-545

Provisional

Provisional

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gas, electricity and true conservation

From Mr A. E. Scriven

Sir, Mr Bryan Smith's contention (February 11) that gas is "overwhelmingly more efficient than electricity" was answered before it was printed, by both Mr Goddard (February 7) and Dr McMullan (February 8). However, he uses this discarded argument in what should be a separate issue, namely that of conservation. But conserving what? Surely Dr McMullan's point is the essential one; given the immense intrinsic value of gas as chemical feed-stocks, protein sources, etc, the real waste is in burning this in domestic boilers, rather than relatively useless materials in power stations.

The important conservation needs for the long-term benefit of the world are not to be measured in theoretical relative thermal efficiencies, but in the overall values of the materials used. Even Mr Benn has now stated that the only power industry with a long-term future is electricity, because it can be generated from so many different sources. We should face that fact now and work towards it rather than running down our electrical construction industry for the sake of these, acknowledged short-term, but illusory gains.

But is the Gas Corporation interested in conservation? Their chairman in his New Year letter to employees, exhorts them to greater marketing efforts to get rid of the extra gas that will, for a short period, be available; why not make it last?

And that balance of payments; what are the true facts? A newsletter announces that the Norwegian company Norsk Hydro, will benefit from 1977 for some 15 years by some £3 £10 per annum per head of 13 million British housewives (£10m to £13m pa) for that one company's share of the Frigg gas that it is selling to British Gas. Most of the Frigg field, where 40 per cent of gas will be coming from, is Norwegian owned; what will the effect of buying this be on our balance of payments? What are we paying to the other operators and the Norwegian Government for their gas? And the supplies in "British" areas; these are not owned by British Gas but are bought from American and other foreign oil companies. What happens when they send their profits home? And remember the serious balance of payments (and consequential runs on sterling) caused by importing capital equipment for the North Sea.

This equipment could have been produced here and there provided employment if there was not some curious desire to exploit and consume, not conserve, a valuable material as quickly as possible. Let's have the full details of exactly how these figures are arrived at; there might be another gas myth to be exploded.

Yours faithfully,

A. E. SCRIVEN,

8 St Mary's Walk,

Kennington,

London, SE11.

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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Strong nerves needed in the market

Business about the ability to deliver income policy market 10 3 pm yesterday. The kind of the subsequent that came in trade figures could have been a surprise. The 30-share index, 40 points in adding days. edged market, order of equity for breath back under the authorities for some kind of it should be a surprise. The rally, rallied by per cent in the month. reason yet to as being the key technical. key for equities ing factors for favourable, even now starting to downgrading of Public Sector investment, ending more than hand of those on and an end of the. sent money illing, however, us for inflation. It remain such lower interest rally in gilts have had a build up their would almost the benefit of it to drive the kind of a Street, which dilly down this wing inflation necessary. rol over the in the United, vials there are use any undue

North Sea expectations later this year. With investment attention switching back to companies more closely dependent on the home economy, overseas earners have sharply underperformed the rest of the market since last October's resurgence and indeed overseas traders are around a tenth of their 1975 high.

Stockbrokers Phillips and Drew see little early reversal of this trend. They expect export earnings, which probably reached a record level in the last quarter of 1976, to come under increasing pressure as sterling recovers and United Kingdom inflation rates to continue to run ahead of those of our main trading partners.

Companies with high proportion of profits from overseas subsidiaries in 1976.

J. Lyons	100
B.A.T.	90
Costs Parsons	90
Shell	90
Boschman	85
General Accident	85
P.B.I.C.C.	80
Fosco Minsep	80
Lamson Industries	80
Pilkington	80
Rank Org.	80

Source: Phillips & Drew. Those companies with a high percentage of exports, such as BSR (85 per cent of profits from exports), Distillers (70 per cent), and Shell (45 per cent), will find it increasingly difficult to chase both volume and margins over the next year. Phillips and Drew also estimate that the 20 per cent fall in sterling in 1976 accounted for a quarter of the 40 per cent jump in industrial profits and as the accompanying table shows many of our leading companies obtained a much higher proportion of their earnings from overseas subsidiaries and a stable trend in sterling will eliminate much of this source of profits growth.

The third area P & D highlights as vulnerable to the recovery in sterling is the restatement of assets and liabilities of overseas subsidiaries at year end exchange rates and that exchange gains are not usually taken above the line around one in five companies do include part of this above the line—ICI in particular and any stabilisation in sterling will accordingly cut profits here.

For all that any recovery in sterling will work to the very considerable advantage of those groups who have been forced to adopt the United States accounting standard FASB 8, notably Rank and Shell, and the fall in sterling last year has had a serious impact on state profits.

However true P & D's conclusion that overseas earners will be overshadowed by home based sectors like breweries and retailers, I doubt if many investment managers will be ditching overseas earners of the usual of Rank & Coleman, Bechem or B.A.T. who have invested heavily overseas in the last couple of years, for the transient benefits to be obtained from groups closely tied to a still frail United Kingdom economy. And that must increase in price profits perhaps owes something to the fact that NM remains an enigma, though a cash-rich one.

Having done nothing yesterday to alter its reputation for extreme reticence among market analysts, the company remains a particularly perplexing proposition for investors. The key

question to which the market still has not received even a part answer concerns the group's apparently excessive liquidity—over £20m cash or equivalent at the last balance sheet date almost half of which was in gilts.

Although investment income of only £1.8m (9 per cent on £20m) suggests that the average cash balance might have been nearer £14m on average, that sum would seemingly offer NM a host of attractive options.

However, although the group changed its policy of always making acquisitions with equity or convertibles with last year's 35p a share bid for George Spencer—which failed completely—NM seems quite happy to let its liquidity go on increasing steadily.

The Spencer bid was purely an attempt to protect the group's existing investment and short of stopping out into the related fields there seem to be few targets for the cash mountain.

On the trading front NM has presumably been helped by an element of restocking by Marks & Spencer which takes 60 per cent of its turnover and has proved a powerful ally during the textile recession. Import quotas have also helped bring about a strong improvement in margins.

Although Lancaster Carpets must have experienced rough conditions, efforts on the export front may have eased the pressures.

At 66p the shares are on a p/e ratio of just under 7 but the 3.5 times covered dividend gives a yield of 6.8 per cent which is unattractive for the textile sector. And although stated cash now represents almost 60 per cent of current market capitalization, any significant improvement in the rating seems unlikely before NM makes its intentions more clear.

Final: 1976 (1975)
Capitalization £34.2m
Sales £91.7m (£77.4m)
Pre-tax profits £11.3m (£8m)
Earnings per share 9.75p (7.18p)
Dividend gross 4.47p (4.06p)

Furniture Tough times

Furniture makers went through a rough patch in the second half of 1976 with fierce competition and depreciating sterling fuelling raw material increases set against a highly fragmented market suffering from static if not actually falling demand.

Quoted from Christie-Tyler last week—sales up 10 1/2 per cent and first half profits down 41 per cent—illustrated the problems. Now, another middle range manufacturer, Harris Lebus, has produced similarly poor results: in the second half the group lost £54,000 against a profit of £204,000 despite a 7.4 per cent increase in sales value.

With interim profits of £125,000 having been cut to £51,000 by the year end, attributable profits come down to £38,000 and earnings per share to 1.8p against 14.4p the previous year. So the shares, unchanged yesterday at 41p, are on a p/e ratio of 22.8, though there is some support in a maintained dividend (short-term of course) which turns a yield of 11 per cent.

Meanwhile, Lebus's balance sheet position has deteriorated with cash and bank balances dropping from over £570,000 at the beginning of the year to around £200,000 by the end.

But with the furniture trade beginning to recover Lebus reports a profitable first quarter's trading and a satisfactory order book. The worst, then, may be over.

Final: 1975-76 (1974-75)
Capitalization £88.542
Sales £9.32m (£8.23m)
Pre-tax profits £61,000 (£309,000)
Earnings per share 1.8p (14.4p)
Dividend gross 4.51p (4.51p)

Throughout October, November and December, the queue of super-tankers waiting to load with crude oil from the Kharg Island terminal 35 miles off the coast of Iran resembled the lines of bargain hunters outside the January sale. On offer from the Iranian were large quantities of crude oil that could be used to build up stocks in advance of the expected price increase on January 1.

As the terminal worked flat out, Iranian oil production soared to record levels. In the final quarter of the year output averaged 6.6 million barrels a day (b/d) compared with 5.8 million b/d for the year as a whole and only 5.3 million b/d in the previous year.

Then came the split within the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) over prices. Iran emerged as the leader of the 11 members that increased prices by 10 per cent and overnight oil buyers lost interest in Iranian oil. The effect on Iranian operations was devastating. Terminal staff who had worked round the clock in the previous three months to keep the tankers moving found that only just over 3.5 million barrels a day of oil were being exported during the first nine days of January.

Output had been expected to decline mainly because all the large oil companies had topped up their storage tanks in the previous three months. But one had expected the slump to be as dramatic.

But by the end of the month Iran's oil production had staged a dramatic recovery. The monthly average output was

5.1m b/d, well below the previous year's but certainly much better than anyone in the Iranian Government had expected for the first fortnight of 1977.

Two factors have produced this recovery each of which will have a significant effect on the thinking of ministers from the Opec countries in their attempts to find a compromise that will enable the damaging two-tier price structure to be abolished.

First, demand for crude oil has picked up more quickly than expected—ever after allowing for the generous stocks held in the consuming countries—because of the severe weather conditions in the United States and the consequent demand for heating oils in Europe.

Combined with the effects of the weather in the oil consuming countries, high winds in the south western part of the Gulf prevented the giant Saudi Arabian oil terminal at Ras Tanura from operating at normal levels throughout most of the month.

According to industry sources Saudi Arabian oil production, far from rising during the first month of the year—may even have fallen below last year's production ceiling of 5.8m barrels a day.

When Shaikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, the Saudi oil minister explained in Doha last December why Saudi Arabia had opted for a five per cent oil price rise in the face of the 10 per cent hike by eleven other members of the organization, he also announced that the 8.5m barrels a day production ceiling was being removed.

With Saudi oil production

moving ahead to 10.5 or even 11m barrels a day, the ten per cent centers faced a substantial fall in their markets as their traditional customers made plans for acquiring their share of the additional Saudi oil.

Without the additional Saudi oil—there is very little extra production available from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi's only supporter in the present "eleven" may not find it too difficult to make their new price regime stick. And voices are now being raised in the oil

industry which suggest that the cheap Saudi oil bonanza may never materialize to the extent mentioned.

After carefully researching the proposals for acquiring part of the increased Saudi output, some of the large oil companies have gained the impression that the rise in exports from Ras Tanura and other Saudi terminals may not be as large as Shaikh Yamani had led oil consumers to believe.

Not all members of the Saudi Government are convinced of the need to raise production so quickly purely to demonstrate the nation's muscle within the organization. There are also those Saudis who are concerned about the increase in the country's monetary surplus that another rise in production would bring.

The Saudis had been under pressure, even before the Opec split to remove the 8.5m barrel

production ceiling. With President Carter promising a two-tiered system of pricing, but with the supply situation moving slowly in favour of the eleven, the impetus is dying for them to reach a fast compromise that would be acceptable to the Saudis and the United Arab Emirates.

The idea widely canvassed by Mr. Abdulaziz bin Khalifa al Thani, the Opec president, that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates should raise their prices by an additional 5 per cent in return for the eleven foregoing their planned 5 per cent rise on July 1 has been rejected.

Attention now centres on a compromise stemming from the Saudi camp which would involve each side adjusting their prices by 2.5 per cent, to produce an average rise from January 1 of 7.5 per cent. It would also mean the loss of the 5 per cent increase from July 1.

In a recent interview the Shah of Iran said he would not stand in the way of a compromise acceptable to the other members of the 11. But sources within Opec felt that this solution is a non-starter unless it makes provision for some kind of further increase later in the year.

Against this background, Opec's economic experts who began talks in Vienna yesterday are in for a difficult time. But it has been made clear to them that there is no chance of a special ministerial meeting to discuss prices unless considerable groundwork can be done beforehand at official level.

Roger Vielvoye

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The Saudis had been under pressure, even before the Opec split to remove the 8.5m barrel

John Earle looks at an increasingly lucrative activity in Italy

Sitting ducks for the kidnappers

One big kidnapping every eight days in 1976, or 48 in all, is something for which Italians should be thankful. For in 1975 there were 62, and in January this year the rate accelerated to 11 in four weeks. Three of these came in 24 hours—Piero Costa, aged 42, of the Costa shipping and olive oil dynasty in Genoa, a Milanese film producer, and the daughter of a wholesale haberdasher in Padua.

The businessman is a sitting duck. What used to form part of the melodrama of rural life in Sicily, Sardinia or Calabria has become cold-blooded big business throughout the country. Among prominent victims in recent years have been the grandson of last Pope Agnelli's son-in-law, the Rome jeweller Gianni Bulgari, and Luigi Rossi di Montelera of a Turin Vermouth firm.

Kidnapping is but one feature of a general increase in crime and political terrorism, the outcome of thirty years of leading things slide by the Christian Democrats and their Coalition allies.

Kidnapping is the quickest way of accumulating capital, with very high profit margins. If all goes well, what impresses the observer is the uncanny way in which the criminals, evidently thanks to well placed contacts in banks, know of the financial resources of families who to judge from their tax returns, are often of only modest means. It has been estimated that the average profit may be as much as 1,000m lire per operation, or around 48,000m lire (32m).

These figures only comprise what the Interior Ministry describes as major or "grave" cases. Countless minor episodes elude statistics. In Turin, for example, it is said to be common for a businessman to hear a voice on the telephone, "We know where your boy goes to school. Have you ever thought the car taking him might have an accident? Then a few days later, another phone call, "Have you reflected about a possible accident? The outcome is a payment in bank

notes of one, two, perhaps five million lire (£3,300).

On a still smaller scale, one hears in Rome of a nanny to a businessman's family who lost the child while playing in Villa Borghese park. Soon an individual appeared who offered to find him. Half an hour later the boy was awaiting collection in a garage for the price of 50,000 lire (£33).

On the medium level, too, companies are exposed to the risk of losing members of their staff who may not be personally rich, though this has not yet become widespread. The State Hydrocarbons Corporation ENI had to help with the ransom of a company official who was seized while visiting a plant in central Sardinia from the mainland.

No one can quantify what this atmosphere means in the running of a privately owned business. But it is about the day management and of future planning and investment decisions.

But, to quote Alberto Benadi, owner of a small plastics firm who is president of the Italian Association of Entrepreneurs' Fearful. Some have transferred the hub of their activities abroad, like Carlo Poni, with Sofia Loren and their two small boys.

If you remain in Italy, you are wise to send your children to boarding school in Switzerland, tighten security precautions at home and in the office, and protect yourself with armed bodyguards, some of whom may follow in a second car.

You can take a judo or karate course, and it is said your chauffeur can go to Switzerland to learn evasive driving. The trained Assassin dog, which will cost much more than only a short while ago.

But if you heed the instructions of the industry minister, Signor Carlo Donat Cattin, you will not take out an anti-kidnap insurance policy with the Government. He regards such policies as immoral and, if anything, an encouragement to the spread of the phenomenon.

No one admits openly to having a policy, but the Italian market is said to be growing, though still behind South America. Typical policies are thought to carry premiums of between five and ten million lire per billion insured, with the first 10 per cent of ransom payable by the policy holder.

A victim who has not let himself be demoralized but is now taking part in public life is 31-year-old Luigi Rossi di Montelera, an executive with the family firm of Martini & Rossi, who was elected in June as a Christian Democrat member of the Chamber of Deputies.

He was missing for four months in the winter of 1973, till Carabinieri searching for another kidnap victim in a farm case across him in a hole in the ground. No ransom was paid. Rossi dislikes talking of his experience, but says he now sleeps normally again.

He is sceptical about the value of insurance, or about the effectiveness of measures such as the freezing of the bank accounts of a victim's family so as to make more difficult the payment of a ransom. There is also a limit to the precautions which a businessman can take for, as he says, they can amount to "a

serious privation of liberty, since you cannot always live as if in a bunker".

For him the most effective counter-measure lies in close surveillance of the activities of known criminals and suspected persons, whether those living in "soggiorno obbligato"—assigned to places of enforced residence or those in prison, where he believes many coups are organized.

There should be authority to inspect these people's bank accounts, at least in Italy, even if it would not be possible in Switzerland, organized criminal bands are responsible for most kidnappings, though there are also the work of political extremist groups.

Rossi summed up his suggestions in a recent parliamentary question, in which he urged the government to take a series of measures, such as "checks on persons sent to places of enforced residence, checks on the activities and financial resources of persons notoriously given to criminal activities, and checks on purchases of farms and houses by suspected persons. And, finally, it was necessary to announce and act against persons whom criminals could rely on to cover their up."

Steps should be taken "to



Luigi Rossi di Montelera: kidnapping victim.

avoid the organizing of criminal activities from inside prisons themselves". And, finally, it was necessary to announce and act against persons whom criminals could rely on to cover their up."

NOTICE OF REDEMPTION

To the Holders of

Queensland Alumina Finance N.V.

9% Collateral Trust Bonds Due 1982

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to the provisions of the Queensland Alumina Finance N.V. Collateral Trust Indenture dated as of April 1, 1970, U.S. \$1,000,000, principal amount of the above described Bonds have been selected for redemption on April 1, 1977, in lieu of a redemption for the purpose of the Sinking Fund, at the principal amount thereof, together with accrued interest to said date, as follows:

BONDS OF U.S. \$1,000 EACH

M-70	1186	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
71	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
72	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
73	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
74	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
75	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
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77	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
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84	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
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88	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
89	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
90	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
91	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
92	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
93	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
94	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
95	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
96	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
97	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
98	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
99	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006
100	1185	2297	9868	0088	8254	7719	9194	10483	11877	12483	13230	14580	15694	17728	18006

commodities[illegible]

The Australian Wool Corporation forecasts a reasonably firm wool market until the end of the year, but with "a number of marked price increases."

Mr. A. C. B. Malden, chairman, told the annual conference of the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association in Western Australia that the AWC is "quietly confident", at least in terms of the maintenance of current demand levels for the wool clip.

"It is true that flagging economic conditions and poor retail trade in many countries have resulted in the worldwide wool activity falling below expectations this season," he said.

"In the current situation, however, wool's performance in competition with synthetic fibres has been extremely good. This is particularly true in view of the low price of synthetics at a time of rising wool prices."

"I do not believe we can expect to see a price difference continuing indefinitely. As wool price increases for wool beyond current levels are certain to prompt substitution into synthetic materials, a course of action when consumption exceeds production. But our objective is to ensure that adjustment is gradual and that the long-term effects on wool demand."

Mr. Malden said that expectation of a reasonably firm market, while wool prices are between now and the end of the year, does not mean that there would be no further price "dips" of the type seen in the past few weeks.

Apart from the effects of occasional reassessment of needs along the textile industry pipeline, there were other adverse factors, such as the selling and shipping schedules which could also influence the market, even though they had little to do with the essential wool supply.

Mr. Malden said that while it was always difficult to speculate on the production level, there was little evidence to suggest that total wool output in 1977-78 would substantially exceed this year's.

"There are, however, indications of a drought conditions in 1976."

"There are always reservations to be expressed in the same line of production level, but predictions of demand outpacing production. The first qualification is that the economic well-being of the wool producing countries is more than 90 per cent of the Australian clip must be such that demand will be sustained."

UK metal stocks

Stocks in London Metal Exchange official warehouses at the end of the year are expected to be: (in silver) were: copper up 700 to 518,700; tin up 425 to 4,750; lead down 350 to 56,750; zinc down 100 to 10,000; nickel down 10,000 to 25,950, 700 troy ounces.

Stocks in London Metal Exchange
official warehouses at the end of
last week (all in tonnes except
silver) were: copper up 700 to
618,700; tin up 425 to 4,750; lead
down 350 to 68,750; zinc down
1,250 to 78,375; silver down 10,000
to 26,960,000 troy ounces.

The Bank of England was believed to have sold more than \$100m from the British reserves to defend sterling on the foreign exchange market. It was also feared that the Bank would announce about the state of the economy revived.

The scale of official intervention failed to prevent sharp losses by the pound, which closed at £1.6970 with a net loss of 150 points.

Dealers said the Bank of England's overall intervention was "not enough to stop the scale of intervention expenditure."

Selling pressure built up early, as the pound fell to a low of opposition to a third stage of wage restraint policy and the proposed devaluation of the "green pound" to £1.50.

But the Bank's intervention to avert alarm pricing arrangements. Later the news of a January trade de.icit of £254m triggered further selling.

The pound's effective rate

	Market rates (\$250,000)	Market rates (\$100,000)
New York	February 14	February 14
London	61.00-62.13	61.00-62.13
Amsterdam	51.7300-7252	51.7370-7250
Brussels	42.23-51	42.23-50 1/2
Copenhagen	62.10-62.30	62.15-30
Frankfurt	9.95-10.10	9.95-10.10
Lisbon	4.00-126	4.00-126 1/2
Madrid	55.00-60	55.00-60
Osaka	116.75-118.10	116.50-117.00
Paris	16.95-17.12	16.95-17.12
Stockholm	8.52-9.00	8.52-9.00
Switzerland	8.43-52	8.43-50 1/2
Portugal	7.17-737	7.17-734
Tokyo	140.00-141.00	140.00-141.00
Vienna	28.50-29.00	28.50-29.00
Zurich	4.34-511	4.34-50 1/2

Effective depreciation since December 31, 1971 is \$3.40, up 8.5% from Friday evening.

[illegible]

Gold fixed: am, \$120.30 1m ounce pm, \$120.45.
Kruggerand (per coin) non-resident, \$120.50-
141.50 (122-22-83.38); resident, \$120.50-147.50
(122-22-83.38).
Sovereigns (new) non-resident, 345-48 (123-
23) resident, 345-48 (27-38).

Discount houses had their best day for about two months yesterday, when they were able to obtain a deal of help from the Bank of Montreal, but they were able to do little more than make a few small loans, most of them to the Bank in the market and were unable to find bills to sell to the Bank at a discount. The volume of business was considerably less than the recent reliance placed on the Bank of Montreal for lending by the Bank at MLR.

The Bank lent only a small sum to the discount houses, and the overnight to three or four houses. Its extremely large bill purchases were made by the Bank of Montreal, both from Bank and houses, augmented from small purchases of local banks. The Bank of Montreal sold bills directly from the houses.

During the early stages, day-to-day money commanded 123-12 to 124-12, but there was an early decline in the rate, and by the middle level houses took money for most of the day. At the close, a steepening of the rate was indicated, and may be found over a band of 6 to 10.

Rates

Bank of England Minimum Lending Rate 12½%
Last changed 2/2/77

Clearing Banks Base Rate 12½%
Discount Rate 10½%
Overnight 10½% 1 month 11½%
3 months 12½% 6 months 13½%
9 months 14½% 12 months 15½%

Treasury Bill Rates (%)

Pricing	Selling
3 months 11½	2 months 11½
6 months 12½	3 months 11½

Prime Bank Bill Rates (%) - Treasury Dis (%)

3 months 11½-12½	4 months 12½
6 months 12½-13½	5 months 12½
9 months 13½-14½	6 months 12½
12 months 14½-15½	

Local Authority Bonds

1 month 12½-13	2 months 12½-13½
3 months 12½-13½	3 months 13½-14½
6 months 12½-13½	9 months 13½-14½
9 months 12½-13½	12 months 13½-14½
12 months 12½-13½	

Local Authority Market (%)			
2 days	12%	3 months	11-12
1 days	12%	6 months	11
1 month	10-12%	1 year	11
Interbank Market (%)			
Overnight	Open 12-13%	Close 11%	
1 week	12-14%	6 months	11-11½
1 month	12-14%	12 months	11-11½
3 months	11½-11¾	12 months	11½-11¾
First Class Finance House (AAA, Rate %)			
3 months	12%	6 months	12
Finance House Base Rate 14½%			

Recent Issues

	Closing Price
Agrie Mkt 1278 1278 1278	1278-78
Do 1464 1468 1468	1468-64
Do 1464 1468 1468	1468-64
Do 1464 1468 1468	1468-64

RIGHTS ISSUED	Latest date of return	
AME Grp (A32.284)		25 prem
<p>Issue price in parentheses. * Ex dividend. † Issued by tender. ‡ Nil paid. § £10 paid.</p>		

Commodities

them to be removed, its introduction not only brings into question the validity of the Stans position on stockpile releases but also suggests that, if any releases took place, they would, in apparent violation of the tin agreement, reach the United States has been denied, made to the domestic market only, or to other countries.

In London, an ITC Head of Delegations meeting has been considering legal opinion on whether the agreement can be extended to cover tin until when its "provisional life" expires. The meeting heard United Nations legal opinion on the extension of the tin agreement, some of the reasons of the pact, confirming such an extension was possible.

The outcome of this meeting will be reported to the ITC at its next session, which has been brought forward to March 1 in view of the urgency of the situation caused by Bolivia's continued refusal to ratify the agreement. But no action is contemplated until the outcome of the mission to Bolivia is known.

Meanwhile, there was a bout of nervousness among London Metal Exchange tin dealers last week on reports of particularly heavy buying, with some talk in the air of an attempt to corner the market.

On Thursday, however, the market opened on a high note later in the day, with the early rumour of an attempt to corner the market being discounted as prices eased and standard cash finished the day £42.50 lower to £5212.50 and three months' gone back £40 to £5,017.50.

Wallace Jackson
Commodities Editor

New York, Feb. 14.—Prices were lower in active trading on the New York Stock Exchange this morning. The Dow Jones Industrial average, was down 0.60 points shortly before 11 a.m. The first-hour volume amounted to 4.8m shares.

[illegible][illegible]

Company	Wages	Charge	Grants	Ytd	P/E
Wirsprung 90	35	—	4.2	12.1	6.9
Wirsprung 18½ CULS	113	+2	18.5	16.4	—
Wirsprung & Rhodes	39	—	3.3	16.3	—
Wirsprung 17½ CULS	100	—	8.2	16.3	5.0
Wirsprung 100	109	—	17.5	16.1	—
Henry Sykes	49	—	2.2	4.5	5.7
Wirsprung 100	69	—	1.6	12.3	—
James Burrough	225	+3	25.0	11.1	5.0
Winnock Jenkins	15	—	—	—	—
Winnock 12 CULS	58	+1	12.0	20.7	—
Winnock Holdings	54	—	6.1	11.3	6.8
Walter Alexander	69	+1	5.8	8.4	7.8

**International Computers
(Holdings) Limited**
Change of name

ngthen its identification as the
g company for the ICL Group the
ny's name has been changed with
rom Monday, 14th February, 1977 to

the Company's intention to issue new certificates
to existing share and debenture stock holders.

[illegible]

Stock Exchange Prices

Heavy losses

Account Days : Dealings Began, Feb 14. Dealings End, Feb 25. § Contango Day, Feb 28. Settlement Day, March 3
§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.

§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.

the teamworkers

Taylor Woodrow

[illegible]

Secretarial and Non-Secretarial Appointments

All recruitment advertisements on this page are open to both male and female applicants.

NON-SECRETARIAL

BOOK-KEEPER

West End wholesale fashion house seeking a young, energetic, agreeable person 25 to 45 years old. Experience in retail, bookkeeping, and sales. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience. Please apply to: **Wendy Adams**, 101-103 Tottenham Court Road, W.1. Tel: 01-495 1234.

CLERK/TYPIST

To assist commercial coordinator with financial and administrative matters. Must be a fast typist with good shorthand. Salary in excess of £2,400. Please telephone initially to discuss and arrange interview. Tel: 01-495 1234.

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Dealing with clients, accepting orders, and processing them. A small but growing business. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

SEWING & KNITTING

MAGAZINE

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Have you spent some time interviewing and hiring a wide range of personnel? Come and see us. We are looking for a person with a good knowledge of personnel. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

GERED

Requires a number of intelligent assistants in their West End specialist shop in Regent Street, to sell china and glass to overseas visitors. Salary according to age and experience. Please ring Miss Tristram at 734 7262.

INTERVIEWERS-TO-TRAIN

Age 30-45. Earn £3,500-£4,000. Includes commission. We need interviewers to help us find the best people for our clients. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

SENIOR SUPERVISOR

A really good typist wanted for a busy office. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

Cheerful, calm telephoneist/ general assistant

for a busy office. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

BOOKKEEPER

Old established West End wine merchant seeking a bookkeeper. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

PROPERTY RECORDS CLERK

for a busy office. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

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for a busy office. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

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Super busy showroom. W.1. Also, requires a P.A. for a busy office. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

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BILINGUAL SEC

26,300 p.a., tax free 3 months paid holidays. Super position in North Africa working for a first class U.K. based company. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

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DAVIES, 01-606 8111. An experienced Secretary, aged 25-30, with good shorthand and typing skills. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

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Organiser £2,500. Senior Secretary. An experienced Secretary, aged 25-30, with good shorthand and typing skills. Salary in excess of £2,400. Call 01-623 7880.

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Secretary/Shorthand Typist (30+), with excellent skills required by West End firm of U.S. Lawyers.

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Must be willing to work substantial overtime including some weekends at generous rates.

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The work involves direct contact with the 360 Tourist Information Centres throughout the country, keeping the diary for the Unit, travel arrangements, and a lot of typing.

This position would suit a person with good typing speeds, a pleasant telephone manner, and who enjoys working as part of a busy team. Shorthand would be an advantage.

Preferred Age Range: 25-30 years.

Excellent conditions of employment including L.V.s, 4 weeks' holiday per annum and an inflation protected pension scheme.

Offices only a few minutes' walk from Victoria Station.

For further details please telephone Chris Addison, Personnel Manager, English Tourist Board, 14 Hobart Place, London, S.W.1 on 01-730 3400, Ext. 202.

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